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NOTICES.

All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of The Bookman, St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

A preliminary letter of inquiry should be sent to the Editor before any manuscript is submitted for his consideration.

News Notes.

A new book by Mrs. Gene Stratton Porter, "Her Father's Daughter," will be published shortly by Mr. John Murray. It is of a kind to appeal both to those who admire her fiction and those who are taken with the fascination of her nature studies.

Under the title of "My Life of Song," Messrs. Cassell will publish this month the life-story of Madame Tetrazzini, the great soprano.

The late Professor Moorman's "Tales," "Plays" and "Songs of the Yorkshire Ridings" are to be issued this autumn by Mr. Elkin Mathews in a single volume. If proof were needed that Mr. Moorman's work has achieved much more than local fame, we have it in the fact that Dr. Busse, of Berlin, has completed a translation of the plays into German. He lately read the first of them in public and it was so enthusiastically received that arrangements are being made for playing it in Berlin during the coming season.

Mr. B. W. Matz is on his native heath again in "The Inns and Taverns in Pickwick," which Mr. Cecil Palmer is about to publish. The book supplies fresh historical facts connected with the chief of the "Pickwick" hostelries, and will be fully illustrated.

The Labour Publishing Company has published a new edition of "The Tyranny of the Country-side," one of the best of Mr. F. E. Green's books about rural England.

Nothing is easier nowadays than to give a book a title that somebody has used before. Mr. Fisher Unwin recently published "Fifty Years of Golf: My Memories," by Andra Kirkaldy, of St. Andrews, told by Clyde Foster. He is now in sackcloth and ashes because he finds that in 1919 Messrs. Newnes published a book entitled "Fifty Years of Golf," by that great golfer Mr. Horace Hutchinson. The only way to render such errors innocuous is to follow the example offered on the wrappers of some recent novels and put the author's name in larger type in front of the title.

Mr. Jonathan Cape is publishing shortly "A Gallery of Games," a book of drawings by "Fougasse," the *Punch* artist, who in private life is

Mr. Kenneth Bird, a civil engineer, and a soldier who was wounded at Gallipoli.

"If," the successful play by Lord Dunsany which is still running at the Ambassadors' Theatre, is to be published immediately in book form by Messrs. Putnams.

There is an interesting and significant article in a little Canadian magazine called *The Magnet* on the necessity for Canadian-made literature. It is anonymous, but if it is not by the distinguished Ottawa novelist Robert J. C. Stead, it is by somebody who has stolen his sentiments and is imitating his style. He insists that, owing to its geographical position, Canada is being snowed under with American newspapers, periodicals and books. "On our news-stands," he says, "I suppose fully ninety per cent. of the periodicals offered for sale were printed in the United States. They were intended essentially for the American people. They cater for American sentiment; they glorify qualities which are supposed to be typically American. But they crowd Canadian publications out of the field because they are big and attractive and beautifully produced; because their stories are written by the most famous authors and illustrated by the cleverest artists. Their publishers have a field of a hundred million people and so are able to produce on a scale which outstrips the Canadian publisher, whose possible field is only about five million, as the remainder of the population do not read English as their native tongue. The fact that these publications are read in almost every Canadian household is having the effect of gradually breaking down our Canadianism; it is propaganda of the most dangerous and insidious type." Those now adult may remain good Canadians in spite of this, but brought up on such reading how will it be, he asks, with their children and their grandchildren? This condition of things has driven many Canadian authors to go and settle in the States and write for American readers, and more will follow them, he thinks, unless Canada puts patriotism above economy and decides to retain her individuality and a literature distinctively her own by giving a more generous support to her native authors.

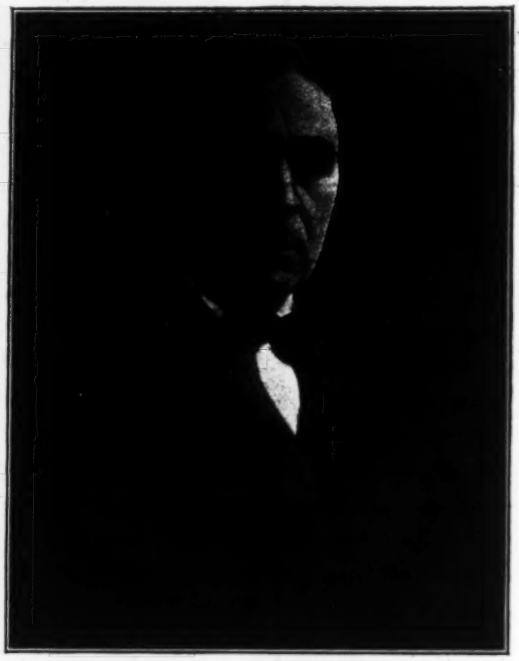


Photo by Elliott & Fry. **Mr. W. Lee-Hankey, R.I., R.E.,**

a collection of whose etchings, "The Etched Work of W. Lee-Hankey, R.E., from 1904 to 1920," by Martin Hardie, has been published by Messrs. L. H. Lefevre & Son.

Mr. Stanley Paul has added a second three volumes to his 2s. series of Cecil Adair's "Joy of Life" novels. The three new additions are "The Sails of Life," "Under the Incense Trees" and "The Dean's Daughter."

"The Book of the Grenvilles," by Sir Henry Newbolt, which Messrs. Longmans have in the press, tells stories from the history of the famous old English family of the Grenvilles, Greenfields, or Grenfells in the fourteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth and twentieth centuries.

Messrs. Heinemann have issued "The Deemster," the first volume in their collected edition of Sir Hall Caine's novels. Well printed and tastefully bound, these books are a marvel of cheapness at 3s. 6d., especially nowadays.

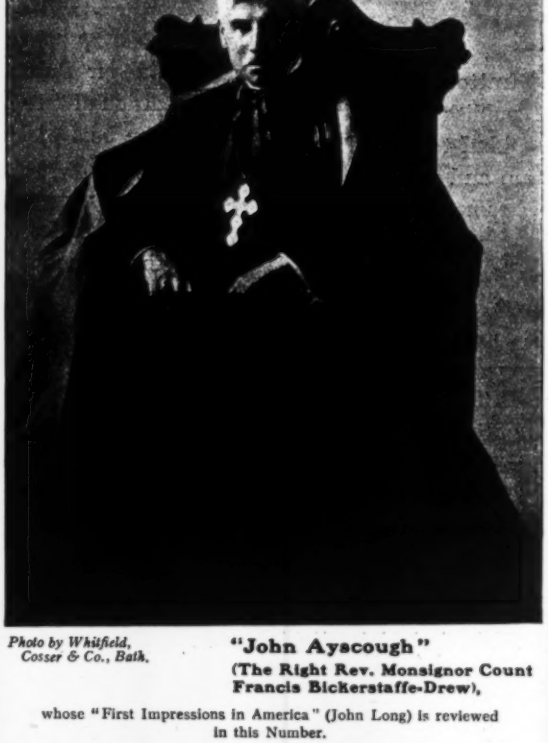


Photo by Whitfield, Cosser & Co., Bath. **"John Ayscough"**
(The Right Rev. Monsignor Count Francis Bickerstaffe-Drew),

whose "First Impressions in America" (John Long) is reviewed in this Number.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé.

Miss Romer Wilson,

whose latest novel, "The Death of Society" (Collins), recently reviewed in the BOOKMAN, has been awarded the Hawthornden Prize.

Foreign teachers and students of English will be amused and interested in "Write English," which Messrs. Heffer & Sons are publishing. It contains translations into English of a large number of essays included in the book, the translations being by pupils of various nationalities and various ages.

Miss Julia Wilber Tompkins,

the clever American novelist, whose new novel, "Joanna Builds a Nest," will be published here shortly by Messrs. Page & Co.

country journalist, has recently returned from Argentina, and in "A Visit to South America" has written a racy descriptive account of that country and the many places he visited en route. The book is to be published within the next week or two by Mr. Stanley Paul.

It looks as if we had found that rare bird a new humorist in Mr. John L. Carter, whose "Putting Mary Off" is published by Mr. John Long. It is described by its first reviewer as "one of the few humorous books which have been published in the last six years."

Mr. Halbert J. Boyd, whose book of short stories, "Men and Marvels," Mr. Elkin Mathews is publishing, is a St. Leonards clergyman, who served as a chaplain in the war, and son of Sir John Boyd, some time Lord Lieutenant of Edinburgh. His first book, "Verses and Ballads of North and South," also published by Mr. Mathews, was recently reviewed in THE BOOKMAN, and met with a very favourable reception alike from critics in general and the public.

Two volumes of "Humorous Ghost Stories" and "Famous Modern Ghost Stories," collected by Dorothy Scarborough, and to be published by Messrs. Putnams, are something new in the way of anthologies. They contain tales of the supernatural by many famous writers of the past and present, including Oscar Wilde, Eden Phillpotts, John Kendrick Bangs and Edgar Allan Poe.

Mr. William J. McKenzie, a well-known south

Rev. H. J. Boyd,

whose book of short stories, "Men and Marvels," Mr. Elkin Mathews is about to publish

---

After some years of silence, Miss Millicent Wedmore is publishing a new volume of poems, "In Many Keys," which Mr. Elkin Mathews has in the press. Miss Wedmore is the daughter of the late Sir Frederick Wedmore.

In the truest sense of the phrase Mr. Safroni-Middleton, whose new novel "An Island Wooing" has just been published by Messrs. John Long, may be described as a world-wanderer. At the age of fourteen he ran away to sea and shipped before the mast for Australia. His subsequent voyages took him to New Zealand, Japan, Borneo, San Francisco, Callao, New Guinea, etc. Studying the violin on the longer voyages, he was able to secure positions in the orchestras of most of the theatres of the seaboard cities down south. He joined in the great gold rush to Western Australia, and again went gold-seeking in the wilds of New Guinea. His most exciting period seems to have been when he settled for a time in the South Sea Islands. He fiddled his way from Fiji to the Solomon Isles and again to the remote Marquesas Group. He was with Robert Louis Stevenson in Samoa in the Vailima days. Mr. Middleton feels that the highest success of his wandering career was attained when he held the position as

tribal violinist to the royal chiefs in Samoa and the Marquesas Isles, where he lived with the natives, became the musical adviser to the kings and queens of the old barbarian dynasties and received the Freedom of the Pagan City. He is still a wanderer. His first literary attempt was in the shape of verse when, through Messrs. John Long, he published his volume of Australian ballads, entitled "Bush Songs and Oversea Voices," which brought him high praise from Sir Henry Newbolt, William Michael Rossetti and Dr. Robert Bridges.

Mr. Wallace B. Nichols, whose new book of verse, "Jericho Road, and Selected Poems," has just been published by Mr. Grant Richards, was born in Birmingham a little over thirty years ago. He was educated at Westminster School where, in 1904, he won the Gumbleton Prize for English Verse. He made his first appearance in print in 1906, while he was still a schoolboy, but his first mature work is in "The Song of Sharruk," which met with high praise from several distinguished critics when it was published in 1916. In collaboration with Mr. Edward Percy he wrote "Coleman," a play, for the late Laurence Irving, but the production of it was stopped by that actor's tragic death. The play was published in America in 1916. "Jericho Road" marks a notable advance on Mr. Nichols's other work, and we hope to give adequate attention to it at an early date.

Photo by A. Cartwright. **Mr. Safroni-Middleton.**

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

Messrs. J. H. Lefevre & Son have published in a limited edition (£4 4s., edition de luxe £10 10s.) a very handsomely produced catalogue of Mr. Lee-Hankey's work as an etcher—"a painter-etcher in the truest sense"—with a biographical and critical introduction by Martin Hardie. The one hundred and eighty-seven beautifully reproduced examples given in the book indicate the breadth and variety of his work and the feeling, the imagination, no less than the brilliant technical power he brings to its achievement. Mr. Hardie's judgments are restrained and discriminating; his enthusiasm for Mr. Lee-Hankey's art is never allowed to run away with him; and that is as it should be in so capable a guide, for it inclines a layman, looking through this series of plates, not only to echo his highest praise but to add to it. They are exquisite in craftsmanship, and alive with that vision without which no craftsmanship is of much avail.

Most of us knew in a general way that the South Sea Bubble was one of the most colossal and sensational swindles in all the romance of finance, and if we know no more we may be forgiven, for only now, two centuries after the event, is the full story told in all its detail for the first time in "The South Sea Bubble," by Lewis Melville (25s.; Daniel O'Connor). It is impossible to compress all its ramifications and an account of its far-reaching consequences into any brief summary. Not even the boldest novelist would have dared to invent such a narrative and put it forward as fiction with any hope of being believed. Great men of Queen Anne's day figure in it, but apart from its historical significances it has an extraordinary human interest, as Mr. Melville says, "insomuch as it is one of the most amazing instances of credulity, exhibited at one and the same time by all classes of society, in the history of the nation." The book is excellently illustrated with portraits and contemporary caricatures.

Some of us began by treating the Shakespeare heresy as a joke, but it has now become such a stale one that we cannot even laugh at it. One has lost count of how many books and pamphlets Sir George Greenwood has written in the pious hope of proving that Shakespeare's plays were not written by Shakespeare of Stratford, but by some man of the same name with another address or by unknown but aristocratic persons who deigned to use that name as a pseudonym. In "Ben Jonson and Shakespeare" (3s. 6d.; Cecil Palmer) he makes another contribution to that barren controversy. He now, by evidence that is nearly all conjectural, sets forth to discredit Ben Jonson. If he can only establish that Ben in writing the preface to the first folio wrote what he knew was untrue and showed himself unscrupulous in what he said, he feels he can justly assume that Ben was only writing with his tongue in his cheek when, in the famous eulogy, he described Shakespeare as "sweet swan of Avon," and so, to the confusion of unbelievers, definitely identified by his address the man who wrote the plays. It is all a sad waste of time. As a lawyer Sir George knows that he would reject his own evidence if it was offered by anyone else in a court of law. This insistence that the plays must needs have been written

by some high-browed aristocrat is the merest intellectual snobbery, and before he asks us to assume that Shakespeare's authorship is so incredible Sir George should explain away Keats. The son of the job-master was as marvellous in his way as was the son of the Stratford tradesman, and there was a finer Grammar School in Stratford than any that Keats ever went to, and no evidence that Shakespeare did not go to it. Sir George offers us nothing new, and solemnly trots out again the old yarn that members of the Elizabethan aristocracy were ashamed to be known as the authors of plays, in spite of the facts that the Earl of Dorset wrote the first English tragedy and did not hesitate to put his name to it, and that no shy peer has been shown to have written any play that mattered that he did not acknowledge in his lifetime. The whole thing is too ridiculous.

"Ashton-Kirk, Criminologist," by John T. McIntyre (2s. 6d. net; Heath Robinson & Birch), is a mystery story as baffling as any of its kind published in recent years, with an explanation so delightfully simple that you wonder how you have been side-tracked by false clues, blaming first this person, then that, for the murder of Tom Burton, known as the "Bounder." Mr. McIntyre successfully throws suspicion on some half a dozen of his characters, giving each plausible reasons for wiping out a man who has bullied his son and daughter, blackmailed his second wife, and generally led a life that cannot bear the light of day. Bat Scanlon, in love with the second wife—an actress of no small repute—undertakes to look into the case for her, and works in conjunction with the criminologist, Ashton-Kirk. If Scanlon blunders now and then it is no great wonder with such a tangle of evidence as he sets himself to unravel. The reader who follows him on his thrilling quest must be prepared to read the book at a sitting, for there is no putting it down till the real culprit has been discovered.

Mr. Wallace B. Nichols,

whose new book, "Jericho Street and Selected Poems," has just been published by Mr. Grant Richards.

Mrs. Emmeline Morrison,

author of "Good Grain," the prize novel in Mr. John Long's £500 best First Novel Competition.

Mr. Humphrey Milford has added to his Oxford Edition of the poets, "Poems of William Edmonstoune Aytoun" (5s.). Aytoun haunts one's memory as an interesting literary figure. He wrote some admirable verse; some that was deft though commonplace, and those "Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers" that are as gallant, thrilling, trumpet-tongued ballads of battle as any that were ever written, and the general judgment, which usually knows what it is about, has long since singled them out from the large body of his work for immortality. One particularly interesting inclusion in this collected edition is the burlesque "Firmilian," now reprinted for the first time—the merciless satire that every one has heard of but hardly anyone of this day has read. It pricked the bubble of poor Alexander Smith's fame so effectively that his later, finer poetry never received a tithe of the recognition that was given to that "Life Drama" which moved Aytoun to this riotous laughter.

That large public which is giving such a vogue to the breezy, picturesque romance of the outlands will find "The Gun Brand," by James B. Hendryx (2s.; Jarrolds), one of the ablest and most alluring stories of its kind. It is a rugged tale of the 60's in the frozen North—a tale of hard living, the lust for money and the desperate rivalry of two men of widely different calibre for the love of a woman.

"Richard Richard," by Hugh Mearns (Constable), modestly claims to be "just a good story," but it is more than that—it is an uncommonly good story, breezy with a spirit of adventure, its dialogue sparkling, its characters original, and a pleasant little mystery piquing our curiosity

all the way through. Of course one could pick holes in it; one could say that the psychology of the book is weak; that a man who had scruples about accepting inherited money because he hadn't earned it would likewise have scruples about borrowing without definite intentions of paying back, and also about "sponging" on his friends; one could say that it is unlikely a boy should take to drink because he could not go to sea, and be promptly cured, after he had become a mental degenerate, by obtaining a boat of his own and the confidence of a good woman—but the charm of the book lies in the fact that one doesn't want to pick holes in it. One catches something of "Richard Richard's" enthusiasm for life, his blatant individualism, his glorious appetite for freedom, and feels, perhaps, a wiser, clearer-headed person for having made his acquaintance. Decidedly a book to give to pessimists.

Good nonsense verse is not so easy to write as it seems; that is probably why it is as scarce as good epics; but Mr. A. P. Herbert has the trick, and his new rhymes for old children in "The Wherefore and the Why" (3s. 6d., Methuen) are a genuine and delightful addition to that little stock of perfect nonsense verse that so few know how to write. His publisher says that the rhymes are in nearly every case based "on little-known scientific facts"; but that doesn't matter—you wouldn't be allowed to use such a joyous book as a textbook in schools, anyhow; what does matter is that, as the publishers truthfully add, "for all their absurdity they are equally good reading for old and young." And Mr. George Morrow's pictures are a separate joy in themselves. You don't want to know whether the smile on his grasshopper's face, or the rapturous expression of his earwig are true to scientific fact; or whether an expert would pass his terrifying flea and his homely spider; it is enough that he puts as much quaintness and humour into his lines as Mr. Herbert does into his, and the result is a book that would cost you more if you had to pay for it at the rate of a halfpenny a laugh.

"Love Is Enough," by Margaret Peterson (8s. 6d.; Hurst & Blackett), is a poignant and brilliantly written story of love and hate, despair and renunciation. Miss Peterson writes powerfully and poignantly of the great drama of human life as enacted in the sun-baked territory of Uganda. Fred Broadwood, a District Commissioner in Africa, and his wife April, together with Timothy, her child by another man, are the main characters in this vivid story of the battle between the love of self and the love of others. Miss Peterson, through the medium of her art, shows how understanding and sympathy are only matured in the crucible of anguish, and how the devastating effect of hate can only be overcome by pain and love—the great transformers of the raw materials of life. Love, if it really be love, learns to forgive the greatest evils one mortal can inflict upon another. The local colour is particularly good in "Love Is Enough," due no doubt to Miss Peterson's intimate acquaintance with the country and people she describes.

Messrs. Frederick Warne & Co. have published a new edition of Sale's translation of "The Koran" (10s.) with explanatory notes, his admirable preliminary discourse, and an introduction by Sir Edward Denison Ross. The importance of a knowledge of the Koran as a key to many vital Islamic problems cannot be overrated, and Sale's discourse is the most informing and interesting commentary that has been written on it.

On re-reading "Josiah's Wife," by Norma Lorimer (8s. 6d.; Stanley Paul), in the new and revised edition, we are not surprised that it should still sell, for it is fresh, always interesting, unpretentious work. The husband and wife do not get on; petulant Camela is a beautiful savage, with a good dressmaker; Josiah is merely a stodgy, bearded, middle-class seller of "ready-made pants and imported tweed-suitings." He had the sense to allow his discontented and adored one to take a year in Europe without him, and here we come on the most enchanting descriptions of Sicily. "Every beggar in Sicily walks as if he were a king. The poorest Sicilian peasant has in his life and before his eyes all day long the beauty and poetry of living . . . the wonderful blue . . . the aloes with their blue-green leaves." In Sicily Camela meets handsome Walter Norreys, and he follows her back to America. Meanwhile Josiah has a certain demure, housewifely Mamie to look after *him*. But Josiah goes to Europe himself, imbibes good manners, shaves off his beard . . . and husband and wife fall in love all over again! Not very likely, but what of that?

Anyone who has seen "The Call of the Road," by Herbert Allingham and A. E. Coleby (2s. 6d.; Heath Robinson & Birch), on the film will be glad to have it in story form. Of course it is a moot point whether a novel should be dramatised for film purposes, and whether a film can be converted into a good novel. We can only say that Mr. Allingham has unquestionably achieved success with Mr. Coleby's play. Altogether an excellent adaption of a first-rate "movie" plot.

"Fanny the Fibber," by Mrs. Horace Tremlett (8s. 6d.; Hutchinson), tells how Fanny Allender, very much down on her luck, gets a glimpse of prosperity through the window of her employer's dining-room, and suddenly devises a scheme for gaining an entrance to that higher plane of society from which she is debarred. She obtains an audience of Mr. Warren and presents him with a "fib" which strikes a blow at the foundations of his married bliss and his respectable reputation. Thrown into a dilemma, Warren makes the disastrous mistake of not telling his wife, who appears at an inopportune moment and takes pity on the girl. She wants to befriend her, not guessing that Warren's sole anxiety is to get her out of the house and silence her untruthful tongue. The situation lends itself to a maze of amusing complications. And Fanny moves in the centre, a lively, lovable little wretch, in spite of her outrageous fibbing. She is ejected by gentle methods, only to secure a post with a relation of Warren; and he, poor man, terrified of her chatter, bribes her to go to Australia instead. Mrs. Warren finds his cheque-book, and Mrs. Tremlett is left with the task of extricating her characters from a terrible tangle and bringing about a happy ending. "Fanny the Fibber" is a story of sparkle and vivacity such as we have learned to expect from her.

THE READER.

DANTE.

By Eugene Mason.

ON the 14th day of September 1921, men and women, in all parts of the civilised world, will recall with a common devotion the glorious memory of Dante Alighieri. Six hundred years ago, that very day, the most famous of mediæval poets ceased to eat the exile's bread he found so salt on his palate; and to be remembered for six long centuries with such a passion of reverence is indeed a foretaste of immortality. In the case of Dante the piety of remembrance will not be limited to the comparatively small number of persons interested in letters. His personality appeals to many different classes of men, for he touched life at many points, and always with the highest distinction. He was a great politician, a great layman, a great lover, as well as a supreme poet. He was concerned with all the arts, the knowledge, the emotions, that ennoble and dignify life, and casting his net so widely, he is secure of the attention of a large and various audience.

Dante.

From the portrait by Amico di Sandro.
(By permission of Mr. John Glen).
From "Dante, 1321-1921: Essays in Commemoration."
(London University Press)

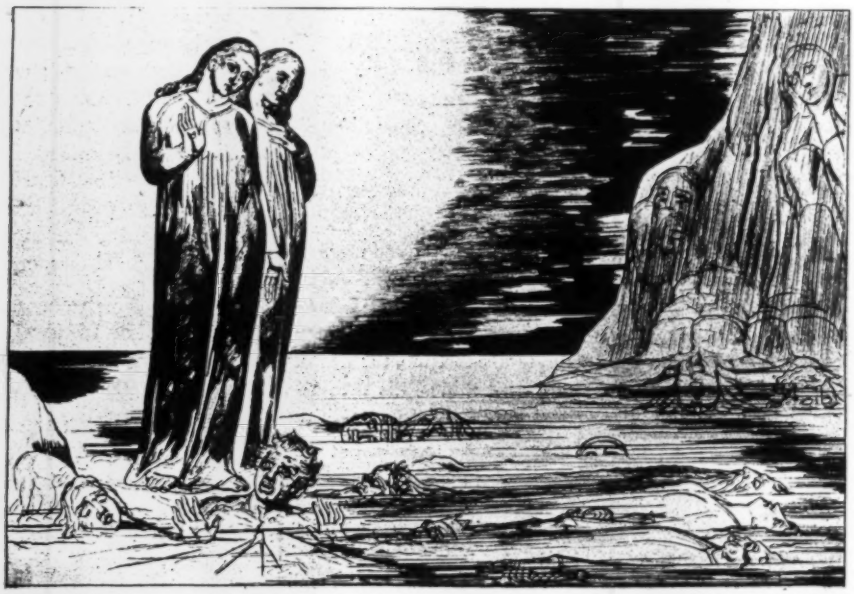
Moreover it is the fortune of Dante to be the most memorable and distinguished figure in that century which rises like a peak above its fellows. However regarded, the thirteenth century is of the utmost value to a student. It was the period in which the magnificent philosophy of the Middle Age—that is to say the ideas which governed its political and theological conceptions—burnt to a white flame. It was then that the classics were rediscovered, and stone cathedrals rose "like Gothic Queens at prayer, alone, silent and adorned." It was the century of Giotto, the father of modern painting; of Francis of Assisi, who reproduced with startling exactness the very life of Christ; of St. Louis the King, who carried holiness to the extreme limit permitted to man; of St. Thomas Aquinas, master of the Divine Science, and the angel of the schools. In its concerns and characters Dante was passionately absorbed, for of that century, beyond all other men, he was the true compendium and synthesis.

Dante was born in the famous town of Florence in the latter part of May, 1265. He was the son of a notary, and came of ancient stock, for he mentions with pardonable pride the exploits of an ancestor who took the Cross against the infidel. His family seems to have been of no political importance, although of some moderate fortune, for despite the temporary triumph of the Ghibellines, his father—who favoured the Guelfs—was permitted to remain unmolested in his native city.

Dante's parents died in his early youth, and the lad, of a sensitive and poetic temperament, fell early under the influence of love. This love was no idle fancy for Rosaline before the advent of Juliet, but, rather, a god of terrible aspect, who constrained his worshipper to cry, trembling, "Behold, a god stronger than I, who, coming, shall rule over me." The record of this radiant devotion of Dante for Beatrice is enshrined in the fragrant pages of the "Vita Nuova," the most delicate and exquisite of all romances dealing with love. It is the addition of "one burning drop of idealism" to the somewhat gross love poetry of the Middle Age. The book consists of a sequence of lyrics and sonnets with a prose gloss or commentary—like apples of gold in pictures of silver—and by the title, "The New Life," the poet probably meant to intimate the transfiguration of his days by his love of Beatrice. The incidents are of the simplest. Dante recalls his first vision of Beatrice as a girl of some nine years, "her dress of a most noble colour, a subdued and goodly crimson, girdled and adorned in such sort as best suited with her very tender age." After a lapse of nine years he sees her again, clothed all in pure white, walking between two gentle ladies older than she, and of her unspeakable courtesy she gives him her most sweet salutation, so that he beheld the very limits of blessedness. He wept at her wedding feast. With agony he set his foot upon and crushed the element of earthly passion in his love. He dreamed in anticipatory vision of her death, and when the vision became dreadful reality he condensed his grief into the exceeding bitter cry from Jeremiah, "How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people."

It is strange that so many commentators persist in regarding "the giver of blessings" as a mere abstraction. I regret that the authoress of "Dante's Mystic Love"* in her interesting volume perpetuates the heresy. Surely tradition and argument alike are right when they affirm

* "Dante, 1321–1921: Essays in Commemoration." 12s. 6d. net. (University of London Press.)—"Dante's Mystic Love." By Marianne Kavanagh. 4s. 6d. net. (Sands & Co.)—"Tophet and Eden." Translated from the Hebrew by Hermann Gollancz. 10s. 6d. net. (University of London Press, Ltd.)



William Blake. **Inferno, Cantos XXXII. and XXXIII.**

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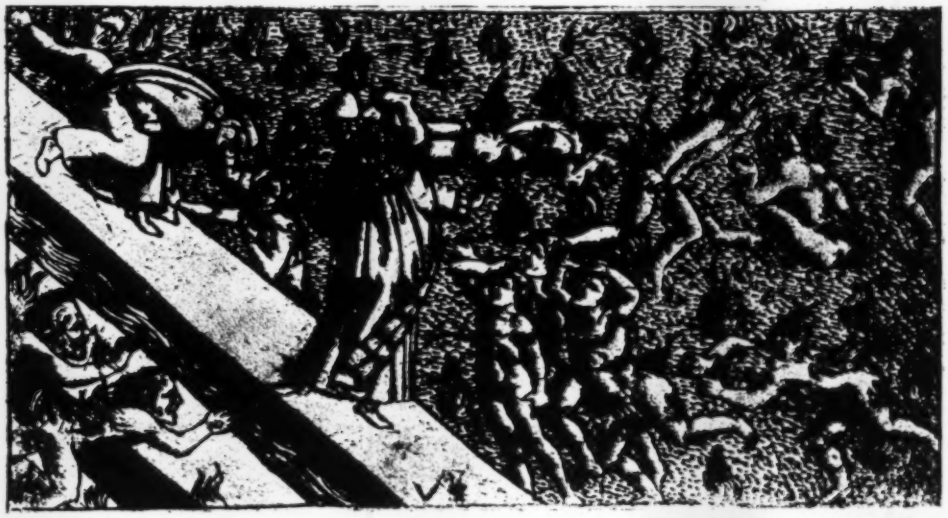
From "Dante: 1321-1921. Essays in Commemoration." (University of London Press.)

that Beatrice was no philosophic abstraction but a dearest reality. No pleading—however ingenious—overcomes the conviction that this lady was the daughter of Folco Portinari, and the wife of Simone dei Bardi. No personification of philosophy—crabbed or divine—suggested the concluding passages of the "Vita Nuova." Only a woman of breathing flesh and of running blood could have inspired that highly wrought and impassioned close:

"If it be His pleasure, through whom is the life of all things, that my life continue with me a few years, it is my hope that I shall yet write concerning her what hath not before been written of any woman. After the which, may it seem good unto Him who is the Master of Grace, that my spirit should go hence to behold the glory of its lady: to wit, of that blessed Beatrice who now gazeth continually on His countenance, who is blessed throughout all ages."

A noticeable change in the life of Dante ensued upon the death of Beatrice. There was always plenty of virility in the delicate dreamer of "The New Life" whose ultra-refined features are preserved to us on the wall of the Bargello. During the very composition of that languid masterpiece he had distinguished himself in arms by fighting valiantly on horseback in the front rank at the battle of Campaldino. His moral character became lax, and his choice of friends open to criticism. This was but a passing phase, and Dante took himself seriously to task. He devoted less time to the study of those Provençal troubadours whom he imitated so closely in youth, and the story of whose influence can be read by the curious in an informing article by Mr. Howell contained in "Essays in Commemoration."* Philosophy absorbed him, and he became a practical politician. He even found occasion to marry a lady, Gemma Donati, from whom he remained happily separated during the greater part of their wedded life. Politics were responsible for much of the misery that became Dante's portion. The politics of Florence were extremely confused. They began with the war of the Red and White Lilies, between Guelf and Ghibelline, between partisan of Pope and Emperor, and after the triumph of the former, continued in the faction fights and vulgar squabbles of the Black and White Guelfs. To enable him to become a professional politician, Dante was enrolled a member of the Guild of Physicians and Apothecaries, and entering on public life as an adherent of the Whites, presently rose to be one of the six priors of the city. All his misfortunes took their cause and origin from this unlucky Priorate. When the Whites were jockeyed and outmanœuvred by their adversaries, Dante as a prominent leader was fined, exiled and sentenced to be burnt to death on a trumped-up charge of malversation of public funds. The sentence was severer than that passed on his colleagues. Doubtless



Sandro Botticelli. **Inferno, Canto XV.**

Reproduced by kind permission of the Trustees of the British Museum.
From "Dante: 1321-1921. Essays in Commemoration." (University of London Press.)

Dante was not an easy person to live with. He went abroad scattering proud and bitter speeches, and, sowing the wind, he reaped the whirlwind. No wonder self-examination taught him that pride was the chiefest of the seven deadly sins. He was an uneasy bedfellow, and Gemma Donati and others could have sympathised with the Scottish mother who exclaimed, "God help the man who is chained to our Davy." Nature had dowered this poet with the hate of hate, and the scorn of scorn, as well as with the love of love.

And now began that climbing of steep stairs which was to occupy Dante's feet for the remainder of his days, and which makes a pilgrimage upon the Via Dolorosa of this austere spirit of such poignant interest to the wayfarer. Possibly Dante may be found as far afield as Paris and Oxford—Oxford even. Certainly he will be met with in Verona at the table of Can Grande; at Padua, probably in the Arena Chapel, watching Giotto at his business of painting; at Siena, absorbed over that Duomo pavement, presently to afford him one of the most striking pictures of his "Purgatory"; at Ravenna, where for some four short years he tasted a measure of peace in the company of his children—Ravenna, where at the age of fifty-seven he entered on eternal peace, and was laid to rest in that strange little chapel on the outskirts of that strange and derelict city.

Dante and Beatrice.

From the painting by Ary Scheffer.
The original is the property of A. M. Hemming, Utrecht.

During the nineteen years of his exile Dante was occupied chiefly with the composition of that wonderful Catholic masterpiece, "The Divine Comedy." It was shapen laboriously, canto by canto, over a long series of years, in many lodgings, and is the fulfilment of that great vow made upon the death of Beatrice to write concerning her what had not before been written of woman. The author entitled his epic, "The Comedy of Dante Alighieri," explaining that it dealt in the vulgar tongue with matters that rose from a base to a prosperous issue. Posterity has added a qualifying adjective, because of the Divine Science with which the poem is concerned, and also by reason of its astonishing beauties. The subject is the journey of Dante, described with an utmost realism, under the guidance of Virgil and Beatrice, through the regions of Hell, Purgatory and Paradise. It rises from the crude and sickening tortures of the "Inferno," through the place of remedial suffering, to the presence of Beatrice and Mary, and to the Beatific Vision. In essence it is a parable of the soul sunk in sin, purified by repentance, brought to peace, made king and priest over itself, mitred and crowned. The actual dream on which the poem is founded is referred to in the "Vita Nuova," but for practical purposes the Vision is placed in 1300, when the poet was in his thirty-fifth year. The journey commenced at daybreak on the Good Friday of that year, and the pilgrimage lasted seven days, Easter itself being spent before the mountain of Purgatory. I do not think that "The Divine Comedy" is an easy book to read. Dante did not profess to feed his readers on sugar-plums, nor did he consider his poem on Hell a substitute for confectionery. He wrote to quicken and inflame the conscience, and to force attention to the overwhelming realities of the Four Last Things. In its cantos he poured his knowledge of Nature and of human nature; he developed his high conception of politics and religion—the Emperor and Pope considered respectively as guardians of men's temporal and spiritual concerns; he uttered his astoundingly candid and naked criticism of life. For the purposes of his art an exile's experiences must have proven invaluable. Neither do I think that the epic should be judged on single episodes, however searching. We may be shaken with pity or terror by the story of La Pia or Francesca, and intolerably moved at the meeting with Beatrice, but we should not dwell overmuch on these detachable beauties. The true greatness of the work (as Dean Church rightly insists) resides in the whole, in that vast intellectual conception which renders us blind and deaf and dumb to the faults of which it certainly has its share.

Dante began life as the delicate dreamer of the Bargello; he ended it lean, with the reek of Hell upon his beard. He wrote first the mystic love story of Beatrice, but that lovely melody was, as it were, played upon a scrannel pipe of straw compared with the cantos of "The Divine Comedy" in which, with a full orchestra, he perfected her praise. Dante was a great politician, a great layman, a glorious poet; perhaps, after all, his highest distinction is that he was a supreme lover.

To all interested in the subjects which this paper has but touched with the finger-tip I would heartily recommend "Dante: Essays in Commemoration." Attention has been drawn already to one of these essays, but others strike me as permanently valuable—Lord Bryce's contribution, and Canon Ragg's paper on "The Humour of Dante" being specially noteworthy. And I should not like to conclude without some reference—however necessarily slight—to Dr. Gollancz's curious "Tophet and Eden,"* translated in rhyme from the Hebrew of a contemporary of Dante, and modelled on "The Divine Comedy," which furnishes an interesting footnote to the influence of the great poet.

DANTE AND HIS PATRONS.

By Mary Bradford Whiting.

"BEFORE authors by profession had fallen into the hands of booksellers," says Isaac Disraeli in his "Calamities of Authors," "they were pitiable retainers of some great family." If it were not for the qualifying adjective, this description might be applied to the poet, the sixth centenary of whose death is being commemorated this year—but Dante Alighieri was never pitiable.

The division of Dante's life into three periods is a frequent one for purposes of study, and it is an interesting coincidence that each of the three closes with a death. His Dream Life may be said to have lasted from 1265 to 1290, when the death of Beatrice pierced his soul with sorrow; his Active Life from 1290 to 1313, when the death of the Emperor Henry shattered his hopes for the consolidation of Italy; his Contemplative Life from 1313 to 1321, when his own death closed his earthly pilgrimage. But in considering the conditions of his career and the effect of those conditions upon his writings, there is some advantage in dividing it into two sections—the period of Citizenship, in which from his birth to his exile he enjoyed the independence of a free agent, and the period from 1302 to 1321, during which he was obliged to accommodate himself to his patrons.

It has been said by some of the biographers of Dante that he would have better preserved his honour and his dignity if he had eschewed the benefits of patronage and submitted to privation and penury. But such an opinion can only be held by those who forget the state of Italy at the time of his exile; it was not only in Florence that the Guelfs and Ghibellines waged their battles, the whole country was torn by feud and faction, and it was therefore imperative for him to seek the protection of some ruler powerful enough to save him from the vengeance of his enemies.

Dante's birthplace, Florence.

Of these patrons there are two who stand out from all the rest—Can Grande della Scala and Count Guido Novello da Polenta—and no two characters conceived by the brain of novelist or dramatist could offer a more striking contrast. It was to Verona that Dante first turned his steps when the ungrateful city of Florence cast him forth from her gates under pain of death if he returned, and it was Bartolommeo della Scala, elder brother of Can Grande, who then ruled over the lovely city on the banks of the Adige; he was a wise and noble lord, but he is principally remembered now as the Prince Escalus of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet," for it was during his reign that the feud between the rival families of Montecchi and Cappelletti led to the tragic result immortalised in the play. Bartolommeo died in 1303, and his two younger brothers, Alboine and Francesco, succeeded him, reigning jointly until the death of Alboine, when Francesco, or Can Grande, as he is generally called, was vested with the sole power. The scathing irony of Rossetti's poem, "Dante in Verona," has made his name known to many who might otherwise never have heard of him; but though Rossetti is doubtless right in saying that it is Dante's connection with him that has kept his name alive in men's minds, his is not a figure in the pages of history that can be brushed aside as of little account. The Scaligieri were a fine, full-blooded race, not only gallant in war, but keenly interested in art and learning of all kinds, and their generosity is proved by the fact that they were willing to shelter an exile who was under the ban of the rulers of his own city and whose political writings had roused the displeasure of the Church.

Can Grande was about twenty-five years old at the time of Dante's second sojourn in Verona; he was in the hey-day of life, prosperous, vigorous, joyous—surrounded by admirers and flatterers; the poet was about forty, stern, silent and sad, banished by the people for whom he had laboured, and separated from his family and friends. It was hardly possible that there should be much sympathy between the two, and though Can Grande received the wanderer kindly and treated him as a welcome guest, all evidence points to the fact that his patronage soon began to weigh heavily on the poet's sensitive soul. The unrefined taste of the age may excuse the young nobleman for his command to a page to collect the bones dropped by the feasters at the table round Dante's chair, so that he might have an opportunity of drawing attention to his alleged inordinate appetite; but that the jest was keenly felt is shown by his flashing retort, with its play upon the name of his host—"*Messere, non vedresti tant ossi se cane io fossi!*" (You would not see so many bones if I were a dog!)

Dante presenting Giotto to the Signor of Ravenna.

From the painting by G. Mochi, in the Gallery of Modern Art, Florence.

A similar play upon words is found in the well-known passage in the seventeenth Canto of the "Paradiso":

> "Yea, thou shalt learn how salt his food who fares
> Upon another's bread, how steep his path
> Who treadeth up and down another's stairs";

where *scale* (stairs) is an evident allusion to the name of della Scala.

But here we come to a difficult point. If this was really Dante's feeling, how is it that he wrote in such glowing terms of Can Grande after he had left his court? The letter in which he dedicates the "Paradiso" to his former patron—a letter generally accepted as genuine—speaks of his kindness as well as of his magnificence, and claims that this kindness was that of friend to friend:

> "Nor do I think that by assuming the name of friend I am presumptuous, as some may suppose, for the sacred chain of friendship links together those who are unequal in rank as well as those who are each other's peers, and between the former may be seen delightful and useful friendships."

Nor is this all, for in that very Canto of the "Paradiso" in which he laments the steepness of the *scale* on which his feet were forced to climb, he says of della Scala that the fame of his bounty shall be spread abroad so widely

> "As not to let the tongue, e'en of his foes,
> Be idle in its praise."

Is there any way of reconciling these two states of feeling? Surely it may be found in the noble nature of the poet himself; the burden of ungracious patronage weighed him to the dust, but even so would he utter no word against the patron, nor could the indignities that he had suffered at his hands make him unmindful of the benefits that he had received; the stairs of the palace had been steep, but its roof had sheltered him; the bread had been bitter, but having eaten it he was bound in honour to respect him who had doled it out to him.

Can Grande's eager, vivid personality is immortalised for us in the sculptured figure on his tomb in Verona; he sits there upon his horse, his face defiant, his lips parted, as though his battle cry of "Viva Cane" was issuing from them as on many a battle-field. But if it were not for that splendid monument and for the allusions to him in the "Divina Commedia," how little thought would now be bestowed upon the illustrious young ruler who, as Rossetti says, resented the fact that Dante would not fawn upon him as if he were the sole arbiter of life and death:

> "Eat and wash hands, Can Grande, scarce
> We know their deeds now, hands which fed
> Our Dante with that bitter bread,
> And thou the watch-dog of those stairs
> Which of all paths his feet knew well,
> Were steeper found than Heaven or Hell."

But when we turn to Dante's last patron, Count Guido Novello da Polenta, we find ourselves in the presence of a man of entirely opposite character and temperament. Can Grande was a born soldier, Guido was a scholar and a poet—his MS. copy of the "Iliad" is still preserved at Milan, one, at least, of his poems has been traced in a collection published in Naples in the year 1661, and others have been collected by Professor Ricci. This contrast is enough in itself to show that Dante had a far better chance of being understood by his new patron than by the Prince who set the Seer of the unseen world to collect tolls and dues. But there was another contrast between the two rulers. Can Grande, though lavish with his gifts, was careless of the feelings of the recipients, but Guido from the first treated his guest with the utmost respect and reverence, as Boccaccio makes abundantly clear in his life of the poet:

> "A noble knight, named Guido Novello da Polenta, was at that time lord of Ravenna, the oldest and most famous town in the Romagna. He was a master in all the liberal arts and delighted to honour great men who surpassed all

others in attainment. When he learned that Dante Alighieri was an exile in Romagna, being aware already of his great fame, and knowing his worth, he hastened to invite him to his house and pay him every honour. . . . Reflecting what shame good men must feel in begging for benefits, he generously made offers to Dante, asking as a favour that which he knew Dante must be in time obliged to ask from him, namely, that Dante would be pleased to come and make his abode with him."

It is evident from this account that Guido was not only a man of great cultivation of mind, but of rare delicacy of spirit.

The sympathy that he showed Dante may have also partly arisen from the fact that he came of a family that had suffered many vicissitudes, while Can Grande's life had been one of unbroken prosperity, since he was not only heir to rulers who had followed each other in unbroken succession, but occupied an exceptionally strong personal position as the head of the Ghibelline League. The Polenta family, unlike the Scaligieri, had had to fight for their throne and they had suffered defeat and exile as lately as the year 1295. That they soon returned to the city seems to be indicated by the passage in the "Inferno" (Canto 27) in which Dante replies to the question of Guido da Montefeltro:

> "Ravenna sta, come stata e molti anni:
> L'aquila da Polenta la si cova."
> ("The state
> Ravenna hath maintained this many a year
> Is steadfast. There Polenta's eagle broods.")

But their tenure was but an insecure one, as after-events were to prove, and Guido was doubtless far better fitted to sympathise with the feelings of a victim of civil strife than the prosperous young lord who had never experienced the buffets of fortune.

There is another point of interest in connection with Dante's host in Ravenna. The unhappy Francesca di Rimini was a member of the Polenta family, and the tragedy of her fate was one that we might well have thought that Dante would have passed over in silence. But it must be remembered that the "Inferno" was written before he went to Ravenna, for we are told by Boccaccio that while he was still in Verona the women whispered to one another as he passed that this man with the dark face and the crisp, curled beard and hair had been scorched by the fires of hell.

Dante.

From the death mask taken at Ravenna, and now in the National Museum, Florence.

And is it not a proof of the noble nature of Guido, as well as of the delicate handling of the story by Dante, that the fact that he had placed Francesca in the "Inferno" did not interfere with their friendship? It was in no censorious spirit that the poet wrote — the tale of hapless love so pierced his heart that as he listened to it, he says, he fell to the ground as one dead, and it was in no resentful spirit that Guido received the description given by Dante of the love-betrayed Francesca driven ceaselessly before the blast.

If the poet had lived but one year longer he would once more have been cast out of his shelter and forced to seek another patron, for in 1322 Guido's power was again overthrown and he fled to Bologna, where he died a few months later. But having been sent to Venice on an embassy, Dante contracted fever on his return journey and died on September 14th, 1321, "to the intense grief of Guido and of all the citizens of Ravenna," says Boccaccio, who gives an account of the splendid funeral ordered by the Count for the friend he had loved so well. His promise of erecting a "noble monument" to his memory would no doubt have been fulfilled if misfortune had not overtaken him; but as it was, only a few months elapsed before the exiled ruler followed the exiled poet to the grave.

All lovers of Dante find consolation in feeling that the weary feet that had wandered so far did at last find rest, and that the bread which he ate in his latter days was devoid of bitterness, and as Guido's reverential love is contrasted with Can Grande's graceless benefits, it cannot but be felt that instead of condemning patrons in the mass as Disraeli did, Tickell had more reason on his side when he concluded his essay in the *Spectator* (November 5th, 1711) by saying:

> "Worthy patrons are like Plato's guardian angels, who are always doing good to their wards; but negligent patrons are like Epicurus' gods, that lie lolling on the clouds, and instead of blessings pour out storms and tempests on the heads of those who are offering incense to them."

THE BOOKMAN PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

SEPTEMBER, 1921.

Answers to these competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing the name and address of the sender) should be forwarded not later than the 14th of the month to

"The Prize Page," THE BOOKMAN, Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

Colonial and foreign readers please note that Competitions II, IV and V are the same each month, and that for the next two months the first prize will be for the best original lyric.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—*Competitors must please keep copies of their verses; the Editor cannot undertake to return them.*

I.—A PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA is offered for the best *original* lyric.

II.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best quotation from English verse applicable to any review or the name of any author or book appearing in this number of THE BOOKMAN. Preference will be given to quotations of a humorous nature.

III.—A PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS is offered for the best brief quotation from English literature applicable to the Washington Disarmament Conference.

IV.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best review, in not more than one hundred words, of any recently published book. Competitors should give the names of Authors and Publishers at head of review.

V.—A copy of THE BOOKMAN will be sent *post free* for *twelve months* to the sender of the best suggestion for THE BOOKMAN Competitions. The Editor reserves the right to use any suggestion submitted.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS FOR AUGUST.

I.—The PRIZE for the best original lyric is divided and HALF A GUINEA each awarded to V. D. Chapman, of The British Embassy, Paris, and G. Lawrence Groom, of 1, St. Mark's House, Regent's Park, N.W.1, for the following:

MOTIVE.

No pipes of pleasure could beguile
  My feet to stray down primrose-ways,
If once you thought it worth your while
  To look at me in hurt amaze
That I should fall so far below
  The ideal that you held of me;
But no one cares to blame or praise—
  What matter what the end may be?

Because of me none ever made
  A dream to worship and revere,
Because I never felt afraid
  Of hurting hopes you might hold dear,
What matter now the fading lights?
  What matter what the end may be?
Yet I had risen to Life's heights
  If once you felt the need of me!

V. D. CHAPMAN.

BANISHMENT.

Haste away, oh, haste away!
All the magic hours are done.
Lips have no more words to say,
All the gold has left the sun,
All the silver sands are run.

Tears? Ah, no! Bend down your head;
Take my hands. . . . The air is chill,
Silent as the shrouded dead
The world is laid. Beyond the hill,
For you the loved adventure still.
The lighted casement dims, the dawn
Steals up the barren road. I see
No glory in a world new-born;
But all heaven's choiréd minstrelsy
Sings with your silent voice to me.

G. LAWRENCE GROOM.

We also select for printing:

WE WENT TO SEA.

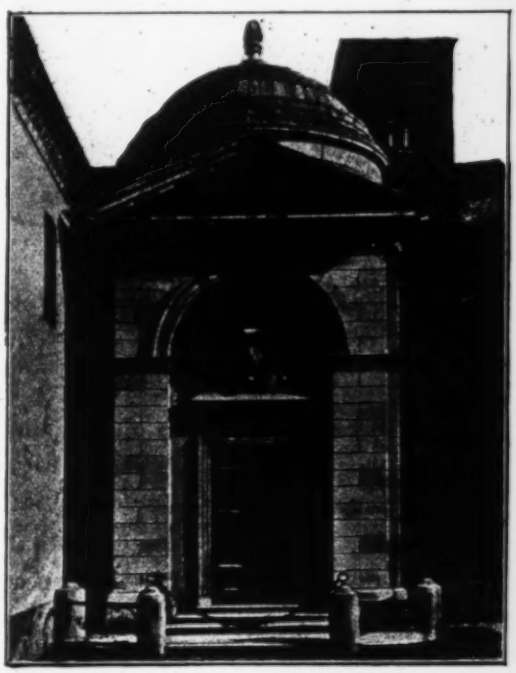
We went to sea one summer night—
You, and my boat, and I;
And the fog came down and hid the land,
But the moon shone still and high.
So we laughed youth's laugh and sought afar
Out where the lone waves sigh;
And I sometimes wish we'd never returned—
You and my boat and I.

(Arthur C. Inman, Garrison Hall, Garrison Street, Boston, U.S.A.)

HAWTHORNE LANE.

As I came home by Hawthorne Lane,
As I came home last night,
Methought musk roses bloomed again
All lit with fairy light;
And goblins then on tiptoe came,
And crowned each bud with glowing flame
And lit the hedges with the same,
As I came home last night.

As I go forth by Hawthorne Lane,
As I go forth to-day,
The roses all are gone again,
Unscented is the way;



Dante's Sepulchre at Ravenna.

The goblins are no longer there,
The hedges are all stripped and bare,
There are no fairies anywhere,
As I go forth to-day.

(Edgar Owen, 47, Church Crescent, Muswell Hill, N.10.)

We specially commend the lyrics by John A. Bellchambers (Highgate), L. M. Priest (Norwich), H. Ross (Hove), Vivien Ford (Bristol), M. A. Coppinger (Cork), G. Gwyn (Bruges), Mary E. McDonough (Liverpool), Freda Isobel Noble (Walthamstow), C. A. Macartney (Vienna), Ivan Adair (Dublin), Vivian Brett-Smith (Boscombe), Pearl Luscher (Rochester, U.S.A.), Mabel Westby-Nunn (Cheltenham), Helen Mitcham (Earlsfield), Kathleen Ida Noble (Forest Rise), Una Malleson (West Kensington), Doris Amy Ibbotson (Newport, I.W.), Anne Richardson (Minehead), Cyril G. Taylor (Edinburgh), M. E. McCartney (Bexhill), B. E. Todd (Kirk Sardel), Rachael Bates (Liverpool), Margaret Brown (Harrow), Dorothy Bowers (Monmouth), H. A. Dudgeon (Musselburgh), Helen Lawrence (Bath), H. Drury (Streatham), G. Seccombe (Woolwich), Margery Constance Nudd (Yiewsley), Cecil Thomas (Quetta), May W. Hamson (Lincoln), K. M. Harvey (Oundle), S. Marguerite Goode (Croydon), Vera I. Arlett (Worthing), Winnifred Tasker (Llandudno), W. A. G. Kemp (Northwood), Phyllis Erica Noble (Walthamstow), John Arthur Lloyd (Ferndale), V. Walker (Whitehaven), Marjorie Crosbie (Wolverhampton), Claude Berry (Shepherd's Bush), B. M. Board (Bexleyheath), Minna Browning (Cheltenham), Ethel E. Manning (Merton Park), Rex Hinton (Clevedon), James Paton (Natal), G. Winifred Savery (Birmingham), Beatrice Cleland (Sydenham).

II.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best quotation is awarded to May Foster, of Parassalla, Travancore, South India, for the following:

IT MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED TO YOU.
By CONINGSBY DAWSON. (John Lane.)

"Jenny kissed me when we met."
LEIGH HUNT, *Rondeau.*

We also select for printing:

IF WINTER COMES. By A. S. M. HUTCHINSON. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

"Marian's nose looks red and raw."
SHAKESPEARE, *Spring and Winter.*

(Maude R. Fleeson, 26, Chatham Grove, Withington, Manchester.)

THE MASTER OF MAN. By HALL CAINE. (Heinemann.)

"Woman, lovely woman."
THOMAS OTWAY, *Venice Preserved.*

(Rev. F. Hern, Rowlands Castle, Hants.)

THE LADY IN WAITING. By WILLIAM LE QUEUX. (Ward, Lock.)

"That woman's asked me fifty times,
And yet I never send an answer."
BARHAM, "*My Letters,*" *The Ingoldsby Legends.*

(H. Gordon Walker, 44, Cawdor Road, Fallowfield, Manchester.)

THE FORGE OF DEMOCRACY. By GABRIELLE VALLINGS. (Hutchinson.)

"The Aristocrat who banks with Coutts,
The Aristocrat who hunts and shoots,
The Aristocrat who cleans our boots—
They all shall equal be!"
GILBERT, *The Gondoliers, Finale, Act I.*

(Kathleen Blyth, St. Joseph's Secondary School, Victoria Road, West Hartlepool.)

THE FORMULA OF THE WESTERN NOVEL.
By W. MACLEAN RAINE.

"There was a little man
And he had a little gun."
Nursery Rhyme.

(B. Noël Saxelby, 43, Claude Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester.)

III.—The PRIZE for the best cover design for the Autumn Double Number of THE BOOKMAN is divided and HALF A GUINEA each awarded to V. D. Goodwin, of Lyndhurst, Gillingham, Kent, and Beatrice Helena Woods, of 43, Victoria Avenue, Surbiton.

None of the many designs received is suitable for use, but the work of these two prize-winners is quite exceptionally good. Miss Goodwin's three pictures show her to be an artist of very considerable gifts, but her three autumn scenes, beautiful as they are, would not make characteristic covers for THE BOOKMAN, though the one in which a girl sits reading is something in the right direction. Miss Woods' drawing, in a very different style of art, is better as a cover design; it has boldness, but wants some touch of life in it to make it effective. We specially commend the designs by Bertha R. Beal (Poole), Jocelyn Ierne Ormsby (Gunnersbury), F. M. Campling (Tunbridge Wells), Joyce C. Woodrow (Worcester), Winifred P. Jessop (Highbury), Gladys Bass (Surbiton), C. Irene Carpenter (London, S.W.), Roland W. Pask (Darlington).

IV.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best review in not more than a hundred words is awarded to C. M. Young, of 15, Albert Bridge Road, Battersea Park, S.W.11, for the following:

REVOLUTION. By J. D. BERESFORD. (Collins.)

This is a remarkable novel in that it contains no love interest, comparatively few characters and little plot, and yet it arrests and holds the attention. The conception of the state to which the country would be reduced by a general strike is interesting from its bearing on current conditions, but the main point of the book is that the analysis of Paul's character and actions so ably represents the dilemma of the average citizen, anxious to hold the mean between industrial and political extremes, but completely bewildered by the apparent impossibility of discovering a practical working basis.

We also select for printing:

LANTERN LANE. By WARWICK DEEPING. (Cassell.)

Perhaps the greatest compliment one can pay to an historical novel is to say that, shorn of their picturesque seventeenth century trappings, the characters might well be living to-day. So intensely human and sympathetic is John Fairfax that the undeserved ignominy which closes his first visit to London and subsequently clouds his life seems almost too cruel. The all too brief glimpse which we are given of the melancholy Merry Monarch is both original and interesting: it sets one wondering. And what a rare treat to meet with a Charles II who neither exclaims "Odd's fish!" nor "Zounds!"

(Christine Mary Pocock, Clevedon House, Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset.)

THE MARRIAGE OF MARGOT. By ARTHUR APPLIN. (Ward, Lock.)

This is a story, not of a marriage as the title implies, but of a pretence at marriage; in which a young and attractive dancing mistress acts the part of wife to a rich man (and would-be member of Parliament) whose real wife is a hopeless inebriate. Needless to say occasions arise that have to be dealt with diplomatically, and the girl Margot shows herself to be mistress of several difficult situations. The unhappy wife dies at the right moment and the rich man wins his election and a second wife, making a dramatic ending to quite a good yarn.

(Kathleen Rice, The Warren, Devonshire Road, Harpenden, Herts.)

We specially commend the reviews by Winifred M. Davies (Brynmawr), Stanley Stokes (Heavitree), Dora Kennedy (Belfast), W. G. Galletly (Ealing), Enid Blyton (Beckenham), Frederick Wilhelmy (Finsbury

Park), Barbara E. Todd (Doncaster), Joan Colborne (Newport), W. Swayne Little (Dublin), B. Noël Saxelby (Manchester), Minna Browning (Cheltenham), Mrs. John G. Scott (Oklahoma, U.S.A.), Kenneth Christopher Bruce (Sheffield), H. Taylor (Haywards Heath), Malcom Hemphrey (Farnborough), Lilian M. Bridges (Salisbury), Sidney S. Wright (Bromley), Maude R. Fleeson (Manchester), Mabel Etchells (Wallasey), Gerald McMichael (Birmingham), J. A. Jackson (Liverpool), D. West (Hull), Roger Hankin (Carlisle).

V.—The PRIZE OF ONE YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO THE BOOKMAN is awarded to Mary E. McDonough, of 12, Portrush Street, Liverpool.

A FRIEND OF CHARLES LAMB.

BY ROGER INGPEN.

IN a letter of Charles Lamb to William Hazlitt, dated November 10th, 1805, he mentions among various scraps of gossip "beneath the dignity of epistolary communication," "Some things about Monkey, which can't so well be written—how it set up for a fine lady, and thought it had got lovers, and was obliged to be convinc'd of its age from the parish register, where it was proved to be only twelve; and an edict issued that it should not give itself airs yet these four years; and how it got leave to be called Miss, by grace. . . ." Monkey was, of course, Louisa Martin, in whose companionship when she was a child Lamb had delighted. During the following year (1806) he commemorated her transformation from an apish child to a beautiful maid with some verses called "The Ape," in which with wistful humour he says:

"I have known the power of two fair eyes,
In smile, or else of glance,
And how (for I a lover was)
They make the spirits dance;

"But I would give two hundred smiles
Of them that fairest be,
For one look of my staring Ape,
That used to stare on me.

"This beast, this Ape, it had a face—
If face it might be styl'd—
Sometimes it was a staring Ape,
Sometimes a beauteous child—

"A Negro flat—a Pagod squat,
Cast in a Chinese mold—
And then it was a Cherub's face,
Made of that beaten gold!

"But Time, that's muddling,
muddling still
And always altering things—
And, what's already at the best,
To alteration brings—

"That turns the sweetest buds to
flower,
And chops and changes toys—
That breaks up dreams, and parts
old friends,
And still commutes our joys—

"Has changed away my Ape at last
And in its place convey'd,
Thinking therewith to cheat my
sight,
A fresh and blooming maid!

"And fair to sight is she—and still
Each day doth sightlier grow
Upon the ruins of the Ape
My ancient play-fellow!"
. . . . . .

Louisa Martin (1850).

He also addressed in the same vein another set of verses a little later (they were published in 1831) to Louisa Martin, "whom I used to call Monkey":

"Louisa, serious grown and mild,
I knew you once a romping child,
Obstreperous much and very wild.
Then you would clamber up my knees,
And strive with every art to tease,
When every art of yours could please.
These things would scarce be proper now."

Practically all that is known about Louisa is from the few references in Lamb's correspondence. Two letters to her from Lamb are known—one in part by his sister. Louisa appears to have been staying with the Lambs in 1806 as Charles records in a letter to Manning of that date that "at twelve o'clock came home Mary and Monkey Louisa from the play." Mrs. Fulton, who can still remember Louisa Martin, is a daughter-in-law of Louisa's sister Sarah, and very kindly related to me recently the following particulars. Louisa was governess, for many years, in the Devonshire household of Sir Thomas Acland by whom she was much esteemed. On the death of Sir Thomas she received a legacy under his will and went to Carlisle, where she kept a school.

This must have been in 1834, for on February 22nd of that year Lamb addressed a letter to Wordsworth which shows how highly he regarded Louisa Martin and her sister. He says:

"I write from a house of mourning. The oldest and best friends I have left are in trouble. A branch of them (and they of the best stock of God's creatures, I believe) is establishing a school at Carlisle. Her name is Louisa Martin, her address 75, Castle Street, Carlisle, her qualities (and her motives for this exertion) are the most amiable and upright. For thirty years she has been tried by me and on her behaviour I would stake my soul. O, if you can recommend her, how I would love you, if I could love you better. Pray, pray recommend her. She is as good a human creature—next to my sister, perhaps the most exemplary female I ever knew. . . . If you want references the Bishop of Carlisle may be one. Louisa's sister (as good as she, she cannot be better tho' she tries) educated the daughter of the late Earl of Carnarvon, and he settled a handsome annuity on her for life. In short, all the family are as sound as a rock."

Some years later Louisa Martin set up a school in

Kensington High Street. She moved to Maidenhead in 1844, returning to London about 1850, and died at Maida Vale in 1858.

There is an interesting story with regard to Sarah Martin, who on one occasion was going to Scotland, when Charles Lamb took her to the coach to see her off. He scrutinised the passengers who were already seated and, liking the appearance of Mr. Fulton, asked him if he would look after Miss Martin during the journey. On arriving at their destination and taking leave of his charge, whom he admired, Mr. Fulton requested that he might be allowed to call on her. She granted his request, and not long afterwards they were married.

Mrs. Fulton has kindly allowed me to reproduce the accompanying silhouette portrait which has been prepared from a life-size profile in her possession cut out of pasteboard.

CHARLES MARRIOTT

By R. ELLIS ROBERTS.

I

MR. MARRIOTT'S new novel — "The Grave Impertinence" (Hutchinson)—is an essay on an old theme, a theme which has occupied him often before. Tenaciously, at times impatiently and with a touch of cynicism, he has endeavoured, since his first book, "The Column," to insist on the dangers of pretence, of sham freedom, of easy rebellion, while he is equally eager to denounce those who would reduce a world of spontaneous beauty to a thing of little order and artificial regulations. In a comparatively early book, "The Lapse of Vivien Eady," the conflict was put sharply, with less subtlety, perhaps, than in such tales as "The Dewpond" and "The Catfish," but with a clearness which made his intention unmistakable. In that story Mr. Marriott for once neglected to be elusive. In the plain contrast between Selwyn Harpur and Humphry Stott he gave us his philosophy almost in the terms of a creed: generally he is content to give it in terms of art, as a question of values rather than of doctrine, of taste rather than theology. Yet what marks Mr. Marriott off from his contemporaries is his awareness of dogma: he may at times try to evade it. There are moments when I suspect he wishes, like other dogmatists, that there were other ways of having your cake than by eating it; but he never allows his desires or his emotions to cloud his intellectual apprehension. He knows you must have dogmas, must have rules, that the whole battle of life consists in not allowing your rules to become prejudices. It is here he contrasts with the sentimental liberalism of Mr. Shaw or Mr. Wells. Long ago Mr. Shaw said: "The golden rule is that there is no golden rule," and so set up with one hand what he destroyed with his other. In "The Lapse of Vivien Eady" Mr. Marriott states a creed which seems to differ little, but yet is worlds away; Hugh Stott says to Harpur and Vivien:

> "My father says that in fishing, like everything else, the first rule is that there is no rule."

That statement is the key to all Mr. Marriott's philosophy. It has guided him as much in his criticism of art as in his criticism of life; and if it betrays him into a certain impatience with the people who always act and speak before they think, it is the impatience of a man who hates to see things wasted, who is convinced that everything should subserve life; that method is a deadening master; that "literature and art are not things apart from life; they are the flower, the fine finish of life itself. If they are not that, then they are mere lumber."

II

In England we do not expect our novelists to have a philosophy. Only a few people noticed Mr. Marriott's until the publication of "Now!" "Now!" is not a favourite of mine. In spite of its excellent comedy, and the beauty of much of the Cornish chapters, the satire is a trifle too deliberate and flatters too much an essentially unimportant part of English society. Mr. Marriott is too good an artist to be wasted on South Kensington. He is not a Londoner born; and I think he is sometimes too apt to exaggerate London's prominence. The capital is grossly overrated; and is never more ridiculous than when it attempts to keep on an intellectual level with Manchester, a city which can safely be left to the enjoyment of its inhabitants. After all places are of value for their exports: and all that is best in London leaves it, and what it gets from other countries belongs not to it but to them. It is a great exchange. Now Mr. Marriott is suspicious of exchange-centres. He is liable to worry overmuch about them. The great social exchanges, governed by convention through the by-laws of etiquette, disturb him. He is too ready to believe that to give a thing a social value is to destroy its real character. For instance, in many of his books he deals with marriage. On the doctrine of marriage he evidently holds the Catholic view; and he dislikes the way in which the world has turned marriage into a convention, or a convenience, or a protest. He is, in such a story as "The Kiss of Helen," in danger of exaggerating the extent to which conventional labels really affect the simple facts of ordinary life. Life gets back on those who pretend: and many who wed for convenience find themselves let in for marriage at its most extreme. Joan Keverne's refusal to marry Paul is near being a tribute to the conventions she despises; she takes insufficient account of the reality which no amount of regularising can kill: truth can survive even the efforts of the theologians, and a violet will smell sweet in spite of all the teachings of the botanists.

Yet there remains a bar. Naaman may bow himself in the house of Rimmon: but he must not neglect the devotions of his own faith, nor deny the God of his allegiance. That is the theme of "The Grave Impertinence," as it was of "The Dewpond," "The Catfish," "Subsoil," and, in a sense, of "Davenport." Not that Mr. Marriott repeats himself. Few novelists are more various, more successful at inventing new characters, and at seeing new facets of old characters. It is that

he is acutely aware of the great struggle not imminent, but actually now in being between the new world of order and organisation, of commerce and business, of truth and convention. He is the most prophetic of modern novelists. "Now!" preceded by some years the gradual disgust of the ordinary citizen at political and parliamentary machinery: it was predictive as well as prophetic. "The Grave Impertinence" in the same way sums up the vague dislike and distrust which many of us feel for the activities of people who use life's essentials for selfish means, who think of money not as a convenient symbol of business, but of business as a convenience for the acquirement of money.

III

It may be said that there is a division of interest in "The Grave Impertinence." The early chapters are concerned with Gilbert Sadler who, after the war, became a draughtsman with a passion for outline, clear vision. Sadler is one of those men, whom Mr. Marriott is fond of drawing, who determinedly limits himself. He shrinks from the personal touch: he cannot de-emotionalise personal relations, and so avoids them. "If he had an ambition it was to commit himself to nothing beyond his reach or outside his immediate control." How far Mr. Marriott believes such an ambition to be possible of realisation I am not sure. In "Now!" he seemed to think such a plan could succeed. It is, of course, only a lack of imagination which permits a man to think anything is within his reach. To Sadler comes Penkevil, who is engaged in a big business concern, the British Light Metal Syndicate, and also is a landowner in Somerset. He owns most of Hinton Causeway, where his neighbour is General Dunsterville, an anti-militarist soldier. Penkevil wishes to build a model village at Hinton Causeway: the Syndicate, represented in the book by Mendoza, encourages his scheme as an advertisement. The book is concerned with the struggle between the two Penkevils—the man who loves the country village, longs for its good, and the man who would not be ashamed to use his village to boom his business. It is the old problem of prostitution against love. Penkevil's position is really analogous to that of a man who will use his wife's social charm and beauty in order to get on in his profession. Something in his soul gives him pause. He cannot be quite certain why Dunsterville and Rose, his daughter, who like him, distrust his association with business: or why they tolerate in Mendoza what they will not in him. Sadler, who finds himself drawn unwillingly into the controversy, goes to visit Penkevil at Hinton House and sees the Dunstervilles at Hinton Court, puts the difference in a sentence: "Hinton House lived by the clock; Hinton Court lived by the sun"—and that brief statement of the quarrel between life and machinery puts the thesis of this novel. It is solved as successfully as it is stated. Mr. Marriott has never excelled the handling of character here shown in the conflicts between Rose and Penkevil; between Penkevil and the Mendozas.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé.

Charles Marriott.

No novelist now alive has a greater power of making ordinary things significant. You may dislike some of his characters—I cannot bear his big, creamy, stupid women with blonde souls and blonde minds—but he never wastes his time or yours in mere photography. When the historian of the twentieth century turns to his documents, few will yield him more material than Mr. Marriott's novels. Not only for themselves, but for their influence—frequently unacknowledged and unrecognised—on such younger authors as E. M. Forster, Gilbert Cannan, G. B. Stern and J. D. Beresford, they are full of instruction for the student of life. For the history of movements the historian will consult Mr. Wells; but for the history of the lives of the middle-class, for the history of those impulses and instincts which feed movements, for those dim, disturbing desires which are the unknown source of opinion and conviction Mr. Marriott's novels are invaluable He has founded no school, and has no disciples: but his work has coloured the less subtle and more popular fiction which is acclaimed as modern. There is not space here to speak of his extreme modernity in form: of his consummate skill in giving the reader a character almost entirely through its reactions on other characters; on his steady refusal to be betrayed into the easier paths of realism or of fantasy. It is not for nothing that he, like Keats and Ibsen, has been an apothecary, a dispensing chemist: the study of science has made him see that nothing is quite so foolish as the "practical" man's philosophy. He writes indignantly yet whimsically here of "that unflinching arithmetical justice, which makes the good accountant waste profitable hours over the unbalanced ha'penny—a justice which, in itself, emphasises the separation of business from life." There you have the key to his philosophy. He resents vehemently anything—business, art, convention, respectability, religion—which separates men from life. That resentment makes him the most optimistic of our modern novelists.

New Books.

SCHOLAR AND POET.*

Perhaps A. H. Bullen's loving editor claims more for these *reliquiæ* than they possess. Perhaps the literary lights who wrote extravagant praise to him saw the things he had written through a medium of their love and admiration for the man. I doubt very much that any one of these "rimes"—to keep his own name for them—would have exactly satisfied the most fastidious of critics, with his great standards. I can remember this beloved man at a table in a Soho restaurant some fifteen years ago, in a characteristic moment. The fourth of the square party—of whom, alas, only one survives—was an Irish-American poet of rare distinction—Louise Imogen Guiney. She was not as good a critic as she was a poet—her enthusiasms got in the way—and as she praised this one and that one's poetic work, Bullen, his splendid head flung back, kept murmuring dissent, too gracious and kindly to prove himself wiser than she, who being deaf was hardly aware of the murmured dissent. All the same the book is extraordinarily interesting—because Bullen is behind it. No one who loved and admired the man can read it without what the eighteenth century diarists called *un serrement du cœur*. It is as though the heart was not so much wrung as shaken. Of course there are many felicities; with such a man anything else would be impossible. "Weeping Cross" may stand by itself; it is a cameo. A Greek poet might have written it as "The Willow":

"With bold heart, high-aspiring aim,
Forth fared he in the morning grey,
To storm the Citadel of Fame
And win a crown of fadeless bay.
Ungarlanded at day's decline,
Ruefully weighing gain with loss,
When neither moon nor stars did shine,
Homeward he stole by Weeping Cross."

But on the whole the little book is hardly representative of a mind as receptive and as richly stored as Bullen's. It would be a wrong to him, I think, to count it as in any way an adequate representation. Bullen was a man in the sense that his beloved Elizabethans were men. There was nothing of freakishness about his mind or character. Thinking of him and of the Elizabethans, from whom he was a stray, one is persuaded that literature should be served by men of action. She is too often served by the unwholesome, the abnormal, the anæmic, who find inspiration in close and ill-smelling rooms instead of under the sun and moon and stars. His melancholy in his latter years has something poignant about it in a nature so robust and so generous. I am convinced that it was primarily due to the fact that he was born a man of action as well as a scholar and poet. But though he knew and loved the country green and was at home and happy in all sorts of village inns and such places, with the odd country characters, he was still too much under roofs and in towns. He should have carried a sword and been a great adventurer, and ruffled it with gallants like himself, instead of having to think of bread for himself and others. He belonged to the elect few. It is only when such as he die that we recognise the magnitude of the loss. There were two Bullens—one the Bullen who loved great libraries and colleges and the classics and the Fathers—cultivated beauty, in fact. There was the other Bullen who could have tramped the country roads with a pack on his back, delighting in what strange company he met, what adventures might befall him. He belonged to the adventuring men, but he belonged also to the scholar, and his nature might well be a battle-ground between the two. I can see him now on a wet February after-midnight in London—during those years of jolly adventure when Laurence and Bullen brought out books after his heart, and the devil take the best sellers! I can see him lifting his hat and letting the wet wind ruffle his hair. "Ah, it is the west wind!" he said. "The Spring comes to London."

Well, since such as he were never made for time or to end, one still thinks of him stepping westward, with the wind in his mane of hair and the cool moisture of the wet, fructifying night on his cheeks and eyes.

KATHARINE TYNAN.

* "Weeping Cross, and Other Rimes." By A. H. Bullen. 5s. (Sidgwick & Jackson.)

A PLAYGROUND OF WORDS.*

After second-hand book catalogues, dictionaries are the most delightful of reading. The best novelists sometimes nod; the best lexicographers never fail. They are not diffuse, and their etymologies are like detective stories—my own favourite form of fiction. Professor Weekley has already given us two volumes of etymological romance, and here discharges upon us all the rest of his material. I wonder he doesn't work some of it up into a thrilling series of stories. "My dear Watson," I can hear him saying, "with the simplicity that has endeared you to a generation of readers and made me by comparison seem brilliant, you naturally think that *petronel*, a horse-pistol or carbine, has some connection with *poitrine*. That, if you will forgive me, indicates the defects of a professional bias. You think that if a petronel could speak it would say 'ninety-nine.' I will admit that the archaic French *poitrinal* seems to offer a clue; but we must always look, my dear Watson, beyond the rough guesses of folk etymology. Lestrade, now—a promising young etymologist, but too much a creature of the Yard—attaches great importance to *poitrinal*. But here is a small monograph I have written in the intervals of morphia-taking and violin-playing, which tracks down a very clear form *petrinal* in sixteenth century French. By careful investigation I have also detected *petrinale* and *pietronella* in Italian, and—this, my dear Watson, I will confess, is a long shot—I have discovered the existence of *pedreñal* in the delightful and sonorous language of Cervantes. Now I imagine that even you, my dear Watson, cannot fail to see the obvious connection with the Latin *petra*, a stone—a word, which you will doubtless remember, is the occasion of the world's most famous pun, as you may see for yourself in the dome of St. Peter's." "Really, Weeklock," I exclaimed, "this is indeed marvellous." "You exaggerate," he replied, with one of his rare smiles, as he waved the hypodermic syringe lightly in the air, "you habitually exaggerate; but I am obliged to you for that charming idiosyncrasy. Well, then, what is the inference? Obviously, that *petronel* has nothing to do with *poitrine*, and does not indicate a weapon slung or fired from the breast, but signifies a flint-lock piece, such as superseded the old matchlock."

I venture to ask Professor Weekley if he sees no possibilities in this method. But I do not wish anyone to infer that the present, more sober embodiment of his material is lacking in interest. On the contrary, it is almost the nicest dictionary I have ever read, and it is printed in such charmingly large type that I can read it at meals. What more can anyone ask of a book? Here, for instance, is one of the entries:

"*facetiae*. In booksellers' catalogues now usud of obscene books, a long way removed from 'merie wordes or deedes without dishonestie; merie conceites with a pleasant grace' (Coop), from *facetus*, graceful, urbane, whence obs. *facete*, now replaced by *facetious*.
"Cheerful, facete, jovial ('Tristram Shandy')."

Professor Weekley has made a special feature of recent slang words and is almost incredibly up to date. I notice, however, that the use of *immense* as a word of approval is not given. A striking person was "immense" without any reference to size. "Slosh," the game that seems as

* "An Etymological Dictionary of Modern English. By Ernest Weekley, M.A. £2 2s. net. (John Murray.)

likely to supersede billiards as bridge superseded whist, does not seem to have come Mr. Weekley's way. Perhaps he doubts its endurance; but it can scarcely be less long-lived than *rhondda* as a verb, which he does record.

Well, here are nearly 1,700 pages of wonderful words, delightfully described. It is a dictionary with humour and it is worthy of the glorious language it seeks to honour. No praise can be higher than that.

GEORGE SAMPSON.

G. B. B. LOOKS BACKWARD.*

There are several ways of writing your reminiscences, when you have lived long enough to have any; two ways in particular. You can be frank and flippant and say as many indiscreet, uncomplimentary things as you can think of about the people you have known, and if you do it smartly enough you will be called brilliant. Or you can practise self-denial, leave a lot of your best stories unwritten, because they could not be told without wounding somebody's feelings, tell only such as are amusing or poignant without being scandalous, and be called genial.

Mr. Burgin has adopted the second course, and this might have counted for virtue in him, only he has such an inexhaustible fund of anecdotes that he could well afford to pick and choose and throw away the sour ones and still have enough of the other sort left to fill his book to overflowing. The result is a gossipy, pleasant, wholly attractive volume that even all the persons he mentions in it may read with enjoyment. If he pulls some of their legs occasionally, he pulls without malice; if he tells any tales against them, he does it with a humour and good-humour that take all sting from his laughter.

Only once does he let you suspect he has a cloven hoof, if he cared to exhibit it, and that is when he prefaces a whimsical account of a lunch he had with Swinburne by describing Watts Dunton as "a remarkable man who by dint of reclaiming great men from their vices, and living with them, had persuaded himself that he also was a great man." It serves to show you that he could do that sort of thing quite neatly if he wanted to, but he doesn't do it again.

All his lively anecdotes are strung on the story of his own career, and he has had a more varied and interesting career than falls to the lot of most writers. He was taken early with the craze (if it is a craze) for writing; his father sent him for a year to Canada, and from that and many a later Canadian experience came, in due course, some of the most successful of his books. Then he went to Egypt as secretary to Baker Pasha; and novels were presently to come of that; returning home, after a spell of office work, he fell in with Robert Barr, and with Jerome, and became sub-editor of the *Idler*. He left that to be a publisher's reader; and combining with Douglas Sladen to start the New Vagabonds Club had before long made acquaintance with most of the leading literary lights of the day, and counted many of them among his friends. All this, and more such, has given him a very cornucopia of material to draw upon, so that he could hardly have written a dull book if he had tried to; as a matter of fact, apparently almost without effort, in the easiest, happiest vein, he has written one of the most entertaining personal memoirs that have lightened our darkness for years past. The only complaint one might make is that he talks of only about two of those sixty-two novels that are going around with his name on their title pages, but he discourses interestingly on his methods of work and the methods followed by other authors, on women writers, on lecturing, and deals faithfully with critics and criticism, and in so many other ways makes atonement for this reticence that you are left with nothing to do but congratulate him and yourself on a book that, despite his occasional hints at disappointments, he must have enjoyed writing, for it makes enjoyable reading.

F. H.

* "Memoirs of a Clubman." By G. B. Burgin. 16s. (Hutchinson.)

G. B. Burgin's Whole-time Hobby.

From a drawing by Thomas Downey.

RUSSIA'S GREATEST STATESMAN.*

This book is an important contribution to recent Russian history. Witte served his country under the two last Tsars. By Alexander III he was liked and trusted; but by Nicholas II and the Empress Alexandra, according to his own account, he was disliked and distrusted. His estimates of the sovereigns were naturally biased by these personal considerations, but throughout his public career Witte ever served his country faithfully, and he was one of the few Russian statesmen of whom it could be said he was a patriot and free from any suspicion of veniality. His memoirs show him to have been egotistical, arrogant, and strong in the belief of his own powers. But these are very human failings and essential for the making of a strong character.

Very typical is his account of the way he conducted the peace negotiations with Japan after that country had certainly worsted the great Russian empire:

"My tone and manner were such that on one occasion Komura exclaimed, 'You talk as if you represented the victor.' To which I retorted: 'There are no victors here, and, therefore, no defeated.'"

Witte was born at Tiflis in 1849. His father was of Baltic origin, but his mother was of the best Russian nationality, her mother being Princess Yelena Pavlovna Dolgoruki. One of Witte's first cousins on the maternal side was the notorious Madame Blavatski. He gives an amusing account of her amazing career. Yelena Hahn at a very early age married Blavatski, Vice-Governor of Erivan, but she soon left him, and some time later travelled as a stowaway on an English ship to Constantinople. There she became an equestrienne in a circus, and having met Mitrovich, a famous opera-singer of the period, she accompanied him to the various European capitals where he was engaged to sing. She next threw in her lot with an Englishman, and went with him to America. Then she reappeared in Europe with the medium Home. For a time she returned

* "The Memoirs of Count Witte." Translated from the original Russian manuscript and edited by Abraham Yarmolinsky. 21s. net. (Heinemann.)

to Tiflis, but meeting again her old lover, Mitrovich, she once more roamed the world with him. Witte says :

" By that time they presented a rather sorry sight, he a toothless lion, perennially at the feet of his mistress, an aged lady, stout and slovenly. . . . Her face, apparently once of great beauty, bore all the traces of a tempestuous and passionate life. . . . But her eyes were extraordinary. She had enormous azure-coloured eyes, and when she spoke with animation, they sparkled in a fashion which is altogether indescribable."

Mitrovich was drowned when the pair were shipwrecked off Africa, and the lady entered Cairo very wet and penniless. But she reappeared in England, and travelled to India. This was her Theosophic period of fame, and of her spiritualistic qualities her cousin candidly says, " There was something demoniac in that extraordinary woman."

Witte fully relates his own career, first in the railway service and then in politics. He became Minister of Finances in 1892, and he was Premier for a short time in 1905–6. It is impossible to deal in a brief article such as this with his account of the causes and the course of the Russian-Japanese war. He does not hesitate to blame his country when necessary, particularly in its dealings at an earlier date with China, in the days of Li Hung Chang. He seems to have been something of a prophet, for at the outset of the late great European war he said it would end with a catastrophe for Russia, and that it would ruin Europe for a century.

With his own unfortunate sovereign, Nicholas II, Witte was never in sympathy, and he draws an unfavourable estimate of his character :

" He is incapable of playing fair and he always seeks underhand means and underground ways. . . . The Emperor's character may be said to be essentially feminine. Someone has observed that Nature granted him masculine attributes by mistake."

He also states what is not generally known—that before his marriage Nicholas had a liaison with the ballet dancer, Kszesinska. It is now the custom to attribute the ruin of the Imperial Family to the Empress and, as he disliked her, Witte is no exception to the rule :

" Nicholas fell permanently under the spell of his wife, a woman hysterical and unbalanced, yet possessed of a sufficient strong character to master him completely and infect him with her own morbidity."

The publishers of this book contribute their quota to the Imperial indictment by asserting that " the late Tsar tried desperately to gain possession of these papers of his former premier, knowing that they would bear perpetual testimony against him at the bar of history." That is rather a flammivomous statement and hardly justified by the revelations of the book, interesting and valuable as it is. And the errors of the Tsar and his wife have surely been expiated by their cruel deaths and those of their innocent children.

S. M. ELLIS.

LONDON KNOWN AND UNKNOWN.*

The interest of London is inexhaustible ; you can never come to the end of it :

" When thou hast done, thou hast not done,"

as Donne says, in a different connection, for there is still more to be seen if you knew where to look for it.

There are many authorities on London, and they can (and usually do) point out each other's deficiencies, for each of them knows something that is not known to the rest. In his " Unknown London " (to say nothing of that masterly book of his, " The Great Fire of London "), Mr. Walter George Bell proved himself wise in the topography of the great city and its historic associations, and in " More About Unknown London " he takes you wandering again into its lesser known by-ways. You may say Gog and Magog in the Guildhall are not unknown to you, but do you know any more of them than that the two figures are there ? Who wrote the earliest British naval dispatch in existence, and where is it ? This and many another of London's treasures Mr. Bell opens to you in his fascinating volume. Stories about the Tower ; of an old printing house in Crane Court ; of Goldsmith's Brick Court rooms from the inside ; of the old Carmelite Vault in Britton Court, Whitefriars—he gossips of such-like out-of-the-way and more or less forgotten survivals of old London with a delightful discursiveness, taking you into odd nooks and corners on the way to wherever he is going and revealing something fresh and interesting about them. An excellent book, and one that the London tourist should take with him if he wants to get off the beaten track and learn of things that, old as they are, will often be new to him.

Mr. Will Owen takes the town as he finds it, and does not mind so much whether it is known or unknown, so long as it is picturesque. He begins at the Roman Bath in the Strand and finishes up with a glance at Strand-on-the-Green, and in the interval has personally conducted you to the Tower, the Charterhouse, the Inns of Court, the Temple, some old churches, several old taverns, houses where famous people lived, quaint courts and alleys, the Bank of England, and other places, of all of which he gives you a brief account in " Old London Town," and sixty of which he illustrates. If you remember the charming backgrounds he has been in the habit of touching into his humorous book illustrations, the charm and delicacy of his drawings here of quaint or beautiful bits of old London will not at all surprise you.

Each of these books is a companionable guide to carry in the pocket, and a real acquisition to that corner of the library where every good bookman keeps his special books about London.

From a drawing by Hanslip Fletcher.

Goldsmith's rooms in Brick Court, Temple.

From " More About Unknown London." (John Lane.)

* " More About Unknown London." By Walter G. Bell. Illustrated. 6s. 6d. (John Lane.)—" Old London Town." Illustrated and described by Will Owen. 5s. (Arrowsmith.)

MANY INVENTIONS.*

Johan Bojer is an idealist: he has got the Vision Splendid. He is also a pessimist: his world is one of bitter disillusion. "God and the Woman" has not the power of "The Great Hunger." There is a sense of hopelessness in it which depresses one with the futility of life as the foremost Norwegian novelist of to-day sees it. This is a book of peasants; and the greed, the narrowness, the greyness of the Northern peasant are all over it. In the Latin countries the workers on the soil are as avaricious and as callous to suffering, but the brightness of the sunlight pierces the gloom of the soul. In England, too, there are memories and traditions of the kindly gods of the earth from sowing to reaping. Rustic life in Norway as Bojer depicts it is a sullen, bitter business.

The central theme is one of ancient tragedy—the barrenness of a woman whose pride is humbled and whose heart is hurt because she cannot bring a child into the world, but the subject is treated in such dull, grey tones that it loses its strength through sheer lack of contrast. Even Thomas Hardy in his most ironic hours was alive to the lighter tinges of the life of the country-side; he never entirely ignored gaiety or a placid content—at any rate in his minor characters. Johan Bojer's one fatal defect is that he is as humourless as Ibsen.

Martha Ersland had been educated as a "fine lady"; she had been engaged to a forester, and she lost him, as she lost her inheritance. These things grieved her, but the sneers of her neighbours grieved her still more. She gave the country-side more cause for derision when she married Hans Lia, a huckster who was a drunkard. Martha knew her man, and welded him to her own purpose. Hans becomes a successful man, losing honesty with each transaction he engages in. There is no one to inherit the big farm and all the possessions it represents. Martha implored Heaven without avail for an inheritor of the little kingdom, built up in sweat and pain. The couple took into their home the little lad, Knut Hamren, who worked on the land for them, and was entirely pleasant, but in an evil hour Martha adopted her sister's boy, Nils, who was crafty even as a child. As the years went by Nils asserted himself more and more and accumulated land and money of his own. In the upshot he evicted the helpless old people from their great farm-house of Dyrendal.

There is matter here for tragedy, but these old folk have small souls:

"They bought a little farm across the fjord. From there they could see Dyrendal as a little speck among the hills far away in another parish. It was a relief to work hard and become tired. After a hard day's work it was possible to sleep. The day came when they did not have the energy to rage and talk about their misfortune any more. But they did want to rise in the world again—not at one throw . . . but they could save and save, and add shilling to shilling—up, up."

There is something in humanity which is pleasurably thrilled by a sense of fear in literature. It is akin to the feeling of children who ask their old nurse to tell them of dragons and other horrific beasts. Miss Nina Toye, who has already written "The Death Rider," is even more effective in a ghostly way in "The Shadow of Fear," which recalls in the shudder it gives Henry James's "The Turn of the Screw." Richards, the butler, and his wife stealthily watching over The Friary are evil in the flesh; James's grim pair were evil shadows. Mrs. Elston, haunted by a brooding and hungry destiny, is a figure from Nathaniel Hawthorne. From the moment that Godfrey meets her she at once attracts and repels by her feverish, mad unrest. Miss Toye is wise in making Godfrey a scientist who is something of a sceptic. His slow conversion to belief in the Shadow which surrounds the old Friary on the edge of the marsh increases the sense of conviction that there are horrors beyond human view. Godfrey's helplessness against unseen influences is the most pathetic part of a tragedy of which his haunted wife is the victim. The quiet, cheerful, courageous figure of Anne illumines this weird story with gentle pity.

"The Old Curiosity Shop."
From "Old London Town." By Will Owen. (Arrowsmith.)

The romance of virile adventure on the high seas and the broad spaces of the earth will never fail of its appeal whatever the evolution of the race. Mr. E. L. Grant Watson's "The Mainland" is a rough-hewn novel with very few graces of writing, but the medium is admirable for the subject. Young John Sherwin, leading a primitive life in an island off the north coast of Australia, uneducated, illiterate, is strange stuff for a hero. His father will not leave the island because he has committed murder—one of those swift revenges which the law cannot overlook and pardon. As the boy grows in strength, disturbing desires arise in him. His father gives him reluctant release, warning him that the world has nothing better to give him than his home. His first patron, Cray, is an amateur sailor and adventurer after Robert Louis Stevenson's own heart. Mrs. Cray is a very modern figure, who enchants the primitive boy by her self-confident beauty and her chanting of magical verses. There is nothing of the poet about John Sherwin, however. His heart is set on more material delights. Mrs. Cray, coquetting with him, is almost swept off her feet, but the dilettante Cray with suave irony gives John his *congé*. Thereafter the boy takes his toll of life—or rather life takes its toll of him. He rises from utter degradation to material prosperity, has more refined sensual adventures, and finally marries a girl whose demure steadfastness keeps him constant.

Stefan Zweig is tainted with the morbid psychology of Freud. In "The Burning Secret" the boy Edgar, son of a beautiful erotic mother, is unpleasantly precocious. The author treats with considerable skill the episode of a mature woman, faithful to her husband and devoted to her son, tortured by an unworthy passion. Her admirer, too, is cleverly depicted. He is simply the "questing beast," well fed, vain, gorgeous in uniform, who has had many conquests and is utterly convinced of his own irresistible attractions. There is something extremely repugnant in the delicate small boy discovering by intuition his mother's folly and sensing the fulfilment of an intrigue. What can one say of a child who reasons in this wise:

"Even their manner towards each other is not what it was. They behave as though they had been naughty and didn't dare

* "God and the Woman." By Johan Bojer. 8s. 6d. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)—"The Shadow of Fear." By Nina Toye. 7s. net. (Heinemann.)—"The Mainland." By E. L. Grant Watson. 7s. 6d. net. (Jonathan Capes.)—"The Burning Secret." By Stefan Zweig. 6s. net. (Allen & Unwin.)

confess. They're embarrassed, they're concealing something. They've got a secret between them that they don't want to tell me. . . . I believe I know what it is. It is what books speak of, and it comes in operas when the men and women on the stage stand singing face to face with their arms spread out, and embrace, and shove each other away."

Little Edgar is no doubt clever, and he manages to kill the love-affair, but one cannot possibly imagine him growing into a decent man.

LOUIS J. MCQUILLAND.

AN ARCH-WANGLER AND OTHERS.*

The "arch-wangler"—quite a good new name for him—is Mr. Lloyd George; the others are President Wilson, M. Clemenceau and M. Briand; Mr. Balfour, Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Hughes; Marshal Foch, Sir William Robertson and Sir Henry Wilson; and Lord Riddell, Sir Maurice Hankey and Mr. Philip Kerr: thirteen of them in all—"Makers of the New World."

One would like to be able to identify the "One who knows them." Not that he is a portrait painter of fascinating personality or transcendent talent but merely because the authorship of all such anonymous character-sketches intrigues one. A professional journalist, one feels sure he is, and in the camp of the Coalition. He has so selected and so dealt with his subjects as to throw the Prime Minister's qualities very ingeniously into the highest possible relief. He shows us Clemenceau "angry, stubborn and so obsessed with the wrong done to *la Patrie* that all vision for the vital need for allied unity was obscured"; President Wilson "vainglorious, tactless, pursuing uncompromisingly his own ideals of international relation"; Orlando, "hysterical and emotional." It needed all Mr. Lloyd George's magnetism, all "his genius as a tactician and conciliator," to keep such "conflicting elements in any sort of concurrence." Mr. Bonar Law, unlike these foreigners, was no hindrance but what a foil! With his drab temperament and depressed spirits! Mr. Balfour serves the same purpose almost equally well. A wonderful man in his way, Mr. Balfour: "To express a point of view, to bring an argument to bear upon any theme, at any time, is a delight to him. . . . But to feel strongly enough to be able to translate one side of an argument into action, and successful action, this he has never been able to do." And we are told how M. Clemenceau, after listening to him for twenty minutes on one occasion, inquired: "*C'est fini? Mais*—are you for or are you against?" As for Foch and Sir Henry Wilson and Lord Riddell and Mr. Philip Kerr, they are splendid fellows all, marvels of efficiency. But who discovered them and to whose credit must be brought the sum total of their many gifts? Why, Mr. Lloyd George!

The two most noteworthy sketches in the book are those of the oldest and youngest members of the thirteen, M. Clemenceau and Mr. Philip Kerr. Of the former some good stories are told. Of even greater interest is the description of the man himself:

"But they are not sympathetic, these piercing, sad brown eyes: they are the eyes of the cynic whose vision has pierced life to the quick, who has no illusions, no tender remembrances, who has ceased to rely upon mankind for help or sympathy; of one who, fighting all his life alone, against great odds, still finds himself at the end of it alone, and still fighting.

"'My wife was unfaithful to me; my children have left me; my friends have deserted me—but I have still got my teeth!'

"This savage outburst of his represents his attitude towards life and mankind. He lives alone on the meagre sum of 12,000 francs a year, in a tiny house, with one servant. He never entertains, never dines out, goes to bed at an early hour and rises equally early. When he was Prime Minister his colleagues were frequently roused from their slumbers in the early morning hours with messages from their Chief, who was already up and at work. When asked why he lived so, he said: 'I prefer to be alone. When I am by myself I can scold my servant if everything is not as I like it. I can grumble and be cross and she does not complain because she knows my ways.' There is something pathetic about this passionate love for solitude on the part of an aged man. It is as if he had tried everything life has to offer and found it wanting—the same instinct perhaps which would have driven a more religious man to a monastery. . . . One might even say that he has little use for friends and does not understand friendship. His colleagues in his Government did not escape his sarcasm. When they provoked him he would turn on them with all the tigerish ferocity which earned him his name and rend them until they cowered before him. Once, having been annoyed by the action of one of the members of his Cabinet who belonged to the Hebrew faith, '*Mon Dieu!*' he cried, 'there is only one Jew in France who does not understand finance and he is my Finance Minister!'"

In Mr. Philip Kerr, it would appear, Mr. Lloyd George had an absolutely ideal private secretary. After declaring that Mr. Kerr is a brilliant writer, too, and possessed of extraordinary knowledge of political affairs, our author proceeds:

"In appearance he is tall and thin, with a striking boyish face. He is loose-limbed and as to his clothes the less said about them the better, for he gives them very little thought. You get the straightest and most searching of glances from those deep and smiling blue eyes. . . . His hair is brushed back from a wonderfully broad, high brow. It is an extraordinarily youthful face for one who holds so responsible a position and whose mind is such a store of experience. He is kept young perhaps by his philosophy and his creed, which do not allow him to meet troubles half-way . . . but rather to give out to those around him help and joy and friendship, so that they instinctively turn to him when in trouble or need."

Mr. Kerr has no personal enemies, we are told, but there are people who distrust those smiling blue eyes of his and who see in him a sinister figure. To one set he is a crafty agent of the Church of Rome, to another the secret Head of the Bolsheviks in Western Europe.

FREDERIC WHYTE.

* "Makers of the New World." By "One Who Knows Them." 7s. 6d. (Cassell.)

SOUTH-SEA MAGIC.*

What a book to read, seated perhaps in the familiar sameness of an English drawing-room, with a conventional caller expected, to partake of tea, and cakes bought at the perfectly correct confectioner's shop round the corner! These wonderfully picturesque recollections of strange people and strange food will waft the reader immediately into the land of enchantment. Such a curious voyage it was, from San Francisco, with the episode of the man like Christ, and the drowning Chinese! Then the approach to the island! Mr. O'Brien was already steeped in the ecstatic pictures painted of it by Bougainville, but here is the description of his own first hint of Tahiti:

"I drew a deep breath of the salt air, when there came to me a new and delicious odour. It seemed to steal from a secret garden under the sea, and I thought of mermaids, plucking the blossoms of their coral arbors, for the perfuming and adornment of their golden hair. But sweeter and heavier it floated upon the slight breeze, and I knew it for the famed zephyr that carries to the voyager to Tahiti the scents of the flowers of that idyllic land."

Shortly after three o'clock the vision became reality, more marvellous, more exquisite, more unimaginable, than the conception of all the reveries of the author—a mass of towering green upon the blue water. Very fascinating is the account given of the hotel in which Mr. O'Brien stayed at Papeete. "What exotic life there was, beyond the clubs, the water-front, and the Asiatic quarter, revolved round the Taire, and entirely so, because of its proprietess, Lovaina. She was the best known and best liked woman in all these South Seas, remembered from Australia to the Paumotus." Perched on a camphor wood chest, the writer listened to the casual oral record of the spreading South Seas. On the same chest had sat many a churchgoing woman and dignified man of Europe and America, shuddering at what they heard; shuddering and listening to Rabelaisian passages of wit. Mr. O'Brien has much to say of the Tahiti women, who have the forwardness of boys, the boldness of huntresses, yet the softness and magnetism of the most virginal of their white sisters. Of the men, it is interesting to note in passing that they abhor beards, and their ghosts, the tupapau, have faces fringed with hair.

* "Mystic Isles of the South Seas." By Frederick O'Brien. 20s. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

We hear all about the men of different nationalities at the clubs—a queer lot; of the joyous scenes when a ship came in, of the trips here and there made by the author. The pages are full of clearly sketched impressions—one, particularly good, of a night walk by the lagoon, with a dozen island schooners swaying by the quay, scores of natives sleeping on verandas, and from the Chinese shop at the corner, the strains of a Canadian actor's falsetto, and above, the ripe moon dipping into the western sea. There are some delightful photographs. We have enjoyed the book; which is quite evidently written by a kindly, observant and tolerant man of the world.

A GOOD FIND.*

This is the prize-winner in the John Long £500 Prize Competition for the best first novel. We had not read far before we discovered that Mrs. Morrison has the gift of being interesting. She deals in short, graphic paragraphs, and tells her tale without useless embroideries and reflections. This is much. Geoffrey Tremayne, the rich musical recluse, discovers Julian Cassillis down in Cornwall, leading the life of a fisherman; singing with his beautiful pure voice by the shore. Tremayne adopts Cassillis, and, in time, Julian meets young Iris Stapleton, "very demure, in a white dress, with a green bow tying up her thick plait of hair." She is a neighbour, whom Tremayne has decided to marry. But Iris is young and ignorant of Tremayne's scheme, and she likes Julian. The writer has succeeded well in her portrait of the heroine, she is natural, inconsequent and feminine. Julian speedily loves Iris, a secret marriage is arranged; and she gives herself to him. Owing to many unforeseen circumstances the marriage cannot take place, and Julian goes abroad. Then, after a time, Tremayne begins his wooing and Iris, unhappy and wretched in the knowledge of her past, yields to his persuasions and becomes his wife. A great love for Tremayne presently comes to her but she cannot bring herself to tell him her secret. The story is briskly and cleverly developed, and the scenes in Algiers are written ably and with careful attention to local colour. Obstacle after obstacle comes into the path of the unfortunate pair, but there is joy at last after full confession.

"He drew her into his arms, and Iris put hers round his neck, and clung tightly to him: and there, at last, was the peace she had craved, sought, and never until then found."

M.

AN ARMY CHAPLAIN AND A WAR ARTIST.†

Two authors, well known for their connection with the army, have recently published volumes of reminiscences—Monsignor Bickerstaffe-Drew the account of a nine months' lecturing tour in the United States and Canada, Mr. Frederick Villiers the record of his half-century of adventure. Both are instructive and entertaining works; and in either case the entertainment enjoyed is derived as much from the attractive light the author sheds upon his own personality as from the number and excellence of his comments and good stories.

What a mine of good stories is Mr. Villiers's autobiography! A man who has received twelve medals and taken part in twenty-one campaigns, who has known Queen Victoria, King Edward VII, the Czar Nicholas of Russia, Lord Dufferin, Lord Kitchener and Cecil Rhodes; who can relate anecdotes of Lord Rowton, Sir Frederick Buxton, Prince Leopold, Lord Cromer, Sir Harry Johnstone and Forbes-Robertson, and who has watched the late Duke of Devonshire searching anxiously through his dispatch-boxes and finally producing for his reading *The Sporting Times*, has obviously all the material for producing a remarkable book. And with what skill, what good humour, what real zest Mr. Villiers has utilised his material! There is not a dull or a spiteful page in the two volumes.

The one outstanding fact that confronts one in Monsignor Bickerstaffe-Drew's impressions of America—a fact that will startle the man in the street and disconcert all good Protestants, is the extraordinary ramification of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. Wherever the Senior Chaplain to the Forces went, east or west, north or south, he found the cathedrals, the churches, the convents and the colleges of his communion. He claims that its adherents outnumber those of any other Christian body; and in a final chapter he ventures to prophesy that, inasmuch as Modernism threatens to desiccate the religion of all the Protestant sects, the Roman Catholic Church will eventually incorporate the great majority of those Americans who hold the faith once delivered to the saints. In other words the New World has been called in to redress the balance of the Old; the spiritual power which the Pope has lost in France, Italy and Spain he has gained among the English-speaking peoples of North America; and these peoples, united with those of Latin America in devotion to the Curia, will soon present the striking spectacle of an entire continent surrendered to the priests. It is a piquant forecast. Whether it will materialise is a question which I have neither the space nor the inclination to discuss in these columns. What I am concerned with is not so much "John Ayscough's" impressions of the religious conditions in the United States as his view of the social characteristics.

His opinion of the American interviewer is not lofty:

"What I did say," he declares, "was never put down, and what was put down I had never said and never would say. Opinions directly opposite to those I had confessed were not only ascribed to me, but put as verbatim into my mouth in long screeds of inverted commas."

The general talk in America, he found, was of money, and that because, as Sir Robert Walpole said of another topic, in that all could join.

"They seem to make it," says the Americans' latest critic, "the life-test and the life-standard, to meditate upon it day and night, as if they could not stand up against it. I doubt if they could believe in the sincerity of any other attitude. Imagination is not their strong point. Of their National Civilisation they are proud; and they mean by it their National Wealth. They are given to think in terms of money. A city is said to contain a million dollar Public Picture Gallery. Every public building in the U.S.A. is marked in plain figures."

Celebrities who are not celebrated seem to be as common in the America of the twentieth century as they were in that of Dickens:

"Americans," says John Ayscough, "have one unusual privilege—they are prophets in their own country. Martin Chuzzlewit suffered from this, and it is a peculiarity still remarkable. The prodigies are not obsolete. Every neighbourhood is illustrated by their presence; every city has its school of prophets, and presentation to them is not difficult but inevitable. Americans are touchingly willing to admit the [super]eminence of people no more eminent than themselves."

It is of course distinction of some kind, or the reputation for distinction, that attracts Americans to strangers and that accounts for their extreme eagerness to know what strangers think of them, a trait half modesty, half vanity. But this distinction must be personal and not inherited:

"Americans as a people," one reads, "dislike royalty and nobility to the point of prejudice and bigotry. An aristocracy they appear sincerely to regard as one of the worst evils of a monarchy. Personal loyalty to a Sovereign is quite incomprehensible to them, and they seem to disbelieve in the possibility of its existence. The survival of royalty at all they regard as a bad joke."

In other words the American habit of mind in regard to a great many important questions is radically different from the English habit of mind. Monsignor Bickerstaffe-Drew renders real service to the Anglo-American *entente* by emphasising this point and by insisting that as a race the British are no more popular in the United States than any other Europeans.

LEWIS BETTANY.

* "Good Grain." By Emmeline Morrison. 8s. 6d. (John Long.)

† "Villiers: His Five Decades of Adventure." By Frederick Villiers, War Artist and Correspondent. 2 vols. 24s. net. (Hutchinson.)—"First Impressions in America." By John Ayscough (The Right Rev. Monsignor Count Francis Bickerstaffe-Drew). 16s. net. (John Long.)

XUM

SOME SHORT STORIES AND A LONG ONE.*

The short story in England has never really come into its own. It is written under difficulties. Publishers discourage it; magazine editors emasculate it; most authors find their efforts better rewarded in the leisurely and lengthy novel than by exercise of that resolute concentration, dexterous construction, and felicity of phrase which are indispensable to a successful short story. Moreover, whilst writing, a man is harassed by the conviction that "they do these things better in France"—a theory which has been rubbed into him so continuously that it cannot fail of a subconscious effect.

Yet, when all's said and done, what an astonishing variety one finds in the British short story! "There are," said Schumann, "only seven notes in an octave"; but of these all music is begotten. From the reiteration, rearrangement, and sequence of these mere seven notes, mankind is endowed with creations as pole-wide apart as, shall we say? the Ninth Symphony and "Bubbles." In like manner, out of that limited range of possibilities which constitutes the gamut of human life (and it is a narrow range at its widest), out of re-arrangements and re-shufflings of personality and event, are evolved short stories so amazingly various that they may be said to have nothing in common.

Here, for instance, is "The Wolves of God," by Algernon Blackwood and Wilfred Wilson. In these "fey stories," as they are labelled, Mr. Blackwood is not quite at his best. One is bound to measure him against himself; and it is a matter of query why a writer naturally so abundant in ideas, so prolific of expression, should require the aid of a collaborator. His favourite supernatural black cat figures in the gruesome "Empty Sleeve"; his hankering after the old gods crops up again in "Vengeance is Mine." As a peculiarly creepy, if peculiar unconvincing tale, "The Decoy" should be avoided at bedtime. Of these fifteen compositions, "The Man Who Found Out" is the most impressively memorable—partly because it offers an insoluble enigma. Yet all are well told, unusual, effective; and each differs entirely from its fourteen companions in plot, in detail, in development. That is where the cleverness of the short-story writer comes in—the cleverness which I desire to extol.

In complete and utter contrast to the above is Miss Findlater's "A Green Grass Widow," whose title distinctly echoes her "Green Graves of Balgowrie." Four simple, reticent, sympathetic little stories of vagrant Scottish tinker-folk. Miss Findlater deals with these obscure, poverty-stricken people as though she loved them. She can invest harsh or squalid incidents with quiet fun and pathos, softening their crudities with a veil of tender tolerance. Behind the dry humour of these war-time incidents—never far behind—lies the sense of mortal tears. The distinction and quality which Miss Findlater can always give to portrayal of inconspicuous events are here plentifully manifest. And not one of these episodes bears the slightest resemblance to the fifteen "thrillers" in "The Wolves of God."

Next on the list is the achievement of that practised hand, Richard Dehan, who has produced so many volumes of similar calibre that one loses all count of them. "The Villa of the Peacock" is distinguished by "a certain liveliness," a marked if rather metallic brilliance, which notably differentiates these chronicles from those of Messrs. Blackwood and Wilson. They are so unlike Miss Findlater's *aquarelles* that no parallel is possible. The name-story reveals how a beautiful Polish anarchist, Ilona Levinsky, by a dramatic *coup* saved Aldobrando II of Spain, at the eleventh hour, from his would-be assassins. It is all very tricky and glittering and artificial. Exactly the same words apply to "The Formula of Brantin," to "Dorotéa et Cie," and indeed to the whole contents of this book. They are skilful, undeniably—skilful and adroit. But they ring hard and hollow; their mirth, like their pathos, is high-pitched, unmusical—emphatically of the stage, stagey. In "The Extraordinary Adventures of an Automobile," on p. 218, the Honourable Captain [*sic*] Yule-Multon has a "silky" moustache; on p. 230 he has a "waxed" one. Neither of these decorations is at all up to date. Why didn't he sport the popular "toothbrush"? This volume will serve to pass an idle evening, but will hardly do much to enhance the prestige of Richard Dehan.

"The House of Rest," by B. M. Croker, is pervaded by a curiously old-fashioned flavour. Nominally, it is about two pretty sisters of twenty-one and eighteen, who ran a select boarding establishment in their old-world village residence, with the result of exhausting their resources and constitutions. But there are so many middle-aged and elderly persons in the narrative that poor youth-and-beauty comes off a bad second. And although a curate and a captain are severally provided for the damsels, their love affairs are so impeccably correct, conventional, and tepid, that one sighs for an outburst, an outbreak, an outlawing, to ginger things up. As it is, the more turbulent emotions are confined to the elderly paying guests. The novel is pleasantly written; its rural tittle-tattle and small-beer chronicles will be enjoyed by those who have forgone the wild freshness of morning. But such sartorial items as "lilac dress," "pink silk sunshade," "black gauze," "gay evening gown," etc., are not quite in touch with modern terminology; indeed, they are more suggestive of George Robey's "good old has-been," and of the aforesaid elderly P. G.'s. However, the staunch adherents of B. M. Croker will welcome "The House of Rest" as readable and congenial. A cheerful domestic atmosphere surrounds the dramatis personæ, even when the heroines are at their most penniless; and one feels certain that the lovely creatures will not be allowed to perish of old-ladyism. No blush will be brought to the most sensitive cheek; no sleepless hour caused to the most neurasthenic. A comfortable chair in a country vicarage garden is the ideal spot for perusal of this amiable romance.

MAY BYRON.

* "The Wolves of God." By Algernon Blackwood and Wilfred Wilson. 8s. 6d. net. (Cassell.)—"A Green Grass Widow." By Jane H. Findlater. 7s. 6d. net. (Murray.)—"The Villa of the Peacock." By Richard Dehan. 8s. 6d. net. (Heinemann.)—"The House of Rest." By B. M. Croker. 8s. 6d. net. (Cassell.)

A MODERN SATIRE.*

Last year, in "Tod MacMammon Sees His Soul," Mr. Adcock showed that satire was not, after all, a lost art; and now in his new poem he gives a still more eloquent proof of the fact. "Exit Homo" is dedicated to the memory of Edward W. Roper who, as the early pages of the poem itself serve to tell us, was an old man who, holding no conventional religious faith and no belief in a world to come, exemplified in his character and conduct, even when stricken with a mortal disease, something of the true spirit of Christianity which is unfortunately so seldom found in those who most fervently protest their allegiance to Christ. Dwelling upon the memory of this brave and happy old stoic, Mr. Adcock is stung into indignation by the contrast between the profession and the practice of most Christians, by the hypocrisy, dishonesty and selfishness that, because of that fundamental insincerity, characterises all "departments" of our present-day society. Is it any wonder, he argues, that the best of men should turn from the Christian teachings when it is observed how those who hold them habitually act?

> "Who could believe, when he had clearly seen
> What such beliefs to those who have them mean?
> What do they mean in our own Christian land? . . .
> Here Church and State walk closely hand in hand;
> Even atheist Premiers, prompted from on high,
> Create new Bishops when the old ones die, . . .

* "Exit Homo." By A. St. John Adcock. 3s. 6d. net. (Selwyn & Blount.)

The bishops and clergy fare very badly at Mr. Adcock's hand; and who, when allowance is made for honourable exceptions, shall say they do not deserve it? But it is not only against them that the author inveighs. Modern business, politics, art and literature, all come under his scathing scrutiny, and he is particularly forceful when he turns to consider the dual rôle which science is so ready to fill:

> "Descending from her studious shrine apart,
> She stands and touts for bidders in the mart
> And, prostitute to high or low desire,
> Offers herself for hire;
> Once the sworn foe of suffering and disease
> She turns, for larger fees,
> From deeds beneficent and, proud to prank
> In uniform and military rank,
> Devotes herself to slaughter, and is paid
> For healing wounds that she herself has made,
> Doing for Death, in that insensate strife,
> As much as she has ever done for life. . . .
> How should she find that any soul is shown
> In man or nature—having lost her own?"

Space, however, is lacking for adequate quotation. It must be enough to say that Mr. Adcock's satire is at once impressively powerful and deliciously subtle, while frequently it sparkles with epigram. He has written a Tract for the Times that is much needed, and it is to be hoped that his rapier will pierce many thousands of too complacent bosoms.

Towards the end of the poem the author reveals his own faith in a future life that must redress the balance of inequality in this; and, returning at last to the friend in whose memory the book is written, he sets forth, by means of a very beautiful analogy, his reasons for believing that all is well with him. The closing pages of the poem are full of a deep tenderness, and the whole volume breathes the warm spirit of humanity that characterises all Mr. Adcock's work.

GILBERT THOMAS.

OUT-OF-DOORS.*

The Professor of Natural History at Aberdeen has written two entertaining volumes, which will be appreciated especially by young folk. He believes heartily that "people who do not at least nibble at the endless brain-stretching but not vexatious problems which their surroundings present, are missing a good deal, both of the meaning and the fun of life." "Nature all the Year Round" is a series of Nature talks—one for each week in the year. It makes a very attractive book in its green cover; it is full of clear illustrations, and the method of splitting up into paragraphs with titles is admirable. It takes the place of the author's "Natural History of the Year," but it has a much larger scope. We looked up at once the section entitled "A Wasps' Nest," and learned quite an array of facts that made us less impatient with the troublesome things. They are carnivorous, and destroy large numbers of injurious insects. Follows a description of their wonderful nests—hanging houses of paper. Professor Thomson goes on to chat brightly of the charms of autumn, and to discourse of the gossamer threads we often see at that time floating in the air—spun by restless spiders who, parachuting along, are borne on the wings of the wind from one parish to the other. The passage on "Autumn Fruits" is full of information which the average man will never have heard of. This is a book of books, and we turned with anticipation to its less ambitious neighbour. "Mountain and Moorland" is meant to interest intelligent people, holiday-makers included, in what is to be seen and enjoyed, inquired into and understood, in the wonderful Aladdin's Cave of the Hills. You must get it if you are going to Scotland. You must get it if you are going to Wales. You must get it if you are staying at home, sighing in a stuffy London sitting-room over past memories of the heather. You will be able to trace many things when you next go out on the moorland, to find strange plants in the bogs, to look with a new eye on lakes and tarns, and the birds of the heights—you, who are no naturalist.

We are grateful to Professor Thomson for his work; grateful particularly for its clear simplicity.

* "Nature All the Year Round." By J. Arthur Thomson, M.A., LL.D. 12s. 6d. (Pilgrim Press.)—"Mountain and Moorland." By J. Arthur Thomson, M.A., LL.D. 6s. (S.P.C.K.)

TWO AMERICAN NOVELS.*

Miss Carolyn Wells.

It is only proper that at the present moment, while we are being introduced to America's most distinctive contemporaries, we should have an opportunity of acquainting ourselves with the work of some of those other novelists who, with every new volume, are gaining more and more favour for their reliable and unassuming competence. Among such writers are Mrs. Cora Harris and Miss Carolyn Wells. Entirely different in their methods, they are certain to find a response on this side also, for in "My Son" Mrs. Harris has written a personal document as the wife of a "circuit rider" in the Methodist ministry, and a profoundly moving and human document it is. She tells of their son during his growth to the man he became; she confesses, "in spite of me," to the time when mother, son and daughter-in-law "all laughed together and love abounded." The various incidents and vicissitudes are tenderly recorded. The author's gift of sly humour, by which she pokes gentle fun even at her own Methodism, serves to make her narrative a thing of colour and homely beauty. When the child was born his father desired to name him after one of the apostles, preferably John. But the boy's mother would not have it. Her husband had himself been too much of a John in meekness and long-suffering. "If there was to be this kind of apostolic succession in the family I wanted one who could refer back to a military precedent, and who could and would cut off somebody's ears under proper provocation."

Miss Wells's book is of a different type. While the author of "My Son" is not only concerned about telling something, but about choosing her words with extreme care, the purpose of Miss Wells in "The Come Back" has been mainly to work out a very sprightly and fascinating detective tale. The intricacies of a plot that is set in the creepy environment of spiritualistic séances, a puzzling murder case and the inevitable detectives, are deftly unravelled, providing some thrilling moments. The Come Back himself, the young hero Peter Crane, is so called because though he was given up for dead in the Labrador Wilds, the faith persists that sooner or later he will return. The expressions of that faith are different with every one of his people. His parents find satisfaction in his "psychic" presence, while his fiancée believes that he will return in body—which he does in the end, welcomed by everybody except two—the spiritualistic medium, and another for whom his return is the worst possible tragedy.

Mrs. Cora Harris.

THOMAS MOULT.

* "My Son." By Cora Harris. 8s. 6d. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.) — "The Come Back." By Carolyn Wells. 8s. 6d. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

A LITTLE MASTER.*

The little masters are a very noble company—less awe-inspiring, perhaps, but often so much more companionable than the great gods. Who can feel for Dürer or Holbein the affection he feels for Altdorfer? What emotions do Milton or Wordsworth evoke at all comparable to those ever at the call of Cowley or Lamb? A few of the gods—Shakespeare, Blake, even Dante—have little moods; they allow you to unbend, not unbend themselves as Milton in his disastrous moments of fun; and one English genius, Christina Rossetti, has made the little so fragrant and heartrending that her devotees put her up beside the thrones of the great ones. One English genius—or must we not now say two? It were cowardice to deny to this book of Mr. de la Mare's the ascription, masterpiece; it has no parallel in our literature for its mixture of wisdom, fancy and caprice, except a few things of Christina Rossetti's, the "Tom o' Bedlam" which Mr. de la Mare quotes once more, and a few of his own poems. It is the life-story of a midget—a little lady rather more than twice as high as the china figures from Dresden or Chelsea which smile satisfaction from collectors' chimney-pieces. Midgetine is no dwarf. She has not, that is, any deformity of body or mind. She is just a woman in miniature, but with a mind, a soul, a spirit more adult than those which usually inhabit common-size bodies. In a sense "Memoirs of a Midget" is a symbolic book, a fairy version of those prophetic books with which Blake thundered at the dull ear of a dense generation. We are an insensitive and susceptible people—very quick to take offence and very prone to give it, very easily on our own dignity and astonishingly careless of others. Well, says Mr. de la Mare, would you ill-treat a midget? Imagine a perfect, complete woman, so small that a table can make her a house, and a flower serve for a parasol, would you laugh at her, geek at her, mock vulgarly at her—or would you be capable of treating her plight, her difference imaginatively? We all shriek, "Of course we'd be decent"; and Mr. de la Mare doesn't contradict us; he merely gives us Midgetine's life-story, and leaves the moral to us. Alas! it rings loud and plain enough. We judge, all of us, sinfully and harshly by appearances, and only walk delicately and discreetly when we approach those great mysteries our own selves and their painful and precious secrets.

The book is not, however, primarily prophetic. It is, as a piece of imaginative fiction, as rare as anything in English since Gulliver went a-voyaging. I will not pretend that Mr. de la Mare has Swift's vehement, fierce, intellectual passion; that were as foolish as to pretend that Francis of Assisi could have written the "De Civitate Dei," or Fra Angelico painted Michael Angelo's frescoes. There are gardens, however, open to Mr. de la Mare, secrets known to him, scents that blow for him which were unnoticed by Swift. If Dickens had really gone to fairyland he might have written some chapters of this book; but it comes nearest in spirit perhaps to Lamb, the Lamb who might have developed had he never seen his mother smitten by pain, or himself passed under the shadow of insanity. Mr. de la Mare is astonishingly, wisely sane. Mrs. Bowater, Pollie, even the rough Adam Waggett, are never caricatured; you are never allowed to forget that God made them, and that if He did not exactly make Percy Maudlin, He at any rate connives at his existence, and has for him, as for the scorpion and the "jigger," some use. It is not easy to give any specimens of the beautiful quality of the story. The book, written by Midgetine, has a unity unusual in prose and almost unknown in fiction. Here is a passage in which Mr. Anon, Midgetine's deformed, dwarfish lover, gives his version of a golden earth:

"He told me, whether in time or space I know not, of a country whose people were of my stature and slenderness. This was a land, he said, walled in by enormous, ice-capped mountains, touching the furnace of the rising sun, and yet set at the ocean's edge. Its sand-dunes ring like dulcimers in the heat. Its valleys of swift rivers were of a green so pale and vivid and so flower-encrusted that an English—even a Kentish—spring is but a coarse and rustic prettiness by comparison. . . . And such was the lowliness and simplicity of the people's habitations that the most powerful sea-glass, turned upon and searching their secret haunts from a ship becalmed on the ocean, would spy out nothing—nothing there, only wild-wilderness of snow-dazzling mountain-top and green valley, ravine and combes, and what might just be Nature's small ingenuities—mounds and traceries. Yet within all was quiet loveliness, feet light as goldfinches', silks fine as gossamer, vision as of a watery beading of silence."

There is no space to tell of the humour of the book, of its rare handling of Fanny Bowater, who bruises and almost breaks the Midget's heart against the steel of her vanity; nor of the startling power of the dreadful yet sublime episodes at the end when the Midget sells herself for a time to a circus that she may gain a greater freedom. Nowhere does Mr. de la Mare's imagination fail him, nowhere does he allow his fancy too great licence, or permit the beauty in the world to become a thing of mere sentiment. It is a sincere, serene book, written in a style which compares to many modern "powerful" styles as does the smooth flow of a great river to the violent, metallic gush of water from air-locked pipes.

R. E. R.

* "Memoirs of a Midget." By Walter de la Mare. 8s. 6d. (Collins.)

OTHER TIMES AND MANNERS.*

Here is a delightful book. It tells what the middle-class homes of England were from the Norman to the Georgian age. You have an inspired antiquary writing. Mr. Helm looks at the relics of our nation's past to see what the life has been, not merely to appraise the market value or the art value of old furniture. He is a connoisseur because he is a humanist. The best kind of patriotism glows in these pages like a fireside warmth and ease. It has given us something novel, and makes a most persuasive plea to the piety of good Englishmen, namely, that certain typical houses which have escaped time's ravages should be now preserved and each of them furnished as an example of its own age. They are all within an afternoon's journey of London. Why should we not be able to visit them, and even to take a simple meal in them, served in character? Mr. Helm's imagination and love of country breathe so much life into dry bones that it will be strange if a beginning is not made with his amiable project.

As a mere reader I have to thank him for very rare and special pleasure. "Homes of the Past" is more to my quiet taste than "Puck of Pook's Hill," and has the same effect of making old times vivid, though it attempts no flights of fancy. It is written at a good time, just when "the physical fight to save a partly civilised world from reversion to utter barbarism is over," and when we are looking wistfully to the future of the great race cradled in England. If this charming project were made known in the Dominions and in America, whence at this time so many lovers of the Motherland have come to admire her modesties and beauties, I think it would find friends. Some of our visitors have warmer hearts for the cradle than we keep who have never left the hearthstone far. It is, perhaps, the daughter nations that are to teach the Motherland a decent pride. But no one can read this book without a new sense of his heritage, and a new kindness for the folk who come to life again unprescient of our times and homely.

It is surprising that so much remains of theirs. It is certain that nothing will remain long unless our piety desires it. But Mr. Helm has found these typical homes, not famous houses of the nobility and larger gentry, and in imagination has furnished them again with the household effects and manners they owned, of which his book is rich with chosen illustrations. They belong to the age of the Great Charter, at Boothby Pagnell, in Lincolnshire; the thirteenth century, Little Wenham Hall, near Ipswich; the age of Chaucer, at Alfriston, in Sussex; the time of the

* "Homes of the Past." By W. H. Helm. With 59 illustrations from pen and ink drawings by A. C. Chappelow. £2 2s. net. (John Lane.)

Roses, Ockwells Manor, in Berkshire; the Tudor period, Hall's Croft, at Stratford-on-Avon; the Restoration, No. 10, Neville's Court, Fetter Lane; the eighteenth century, No. 80, Pall Mall and No. 16, Queen Anne's Gate. Each house is typical, and some of these houses have personal associations that had invested them with romance already. Seen as they now are in a literary setting that revives the doings of their respective periods, all of them become important. As to their preservation, it is only an anxious matter in the case of two, which have ceased to be homes; and the proposal to secure them, or any of them, for such a body as the National Trust or the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings, is naturally subject to the willingness of their owners to part with them. If this is found wanting, there may be others elsewhere. The proposal could not have been more gently made, or more attractively commended to public spirit.

Incidentally Mr. Helm has much to tell of the losses due to neglect and vandalism, as well as to those enterprises and "improvements" which one generation undertakes at the cost of another with small concern for what is worth treasuring. His stories to this effect are disquieting; and in an appendix he prints the French law on the subject, which is in some respects better than ours. The book is admirable in design and get-up, a handsome addition to the good library. Its purpose apart, "Homes of the Past" must be welcomed alike by students of history and manners and by lovers of those kinds of good reading which derive their appeal from culture, taste and individual charm.

KEIGHLEY SNOWDEN.

A BUSINESS WOMAN.*

Mr. Fletcher is not one of those novelists—very brilliant men, some of them—whose art is a one-stringed instrument. He turned from writing the most charming idylls of Yorkshire life to give us some of the cleverest sensational novels of recent years, and he passes from these to starkly realistic stories whose comedy and tragedy are deep rooted in the characters of his north country men and women. Such a story was "The Valley of Headstrong Men," and it is not too much to say that "The Root of All Evil" is an abler and even more powerful study in the same genre. Jeckie Farnish is drawn cleverly, and without compromise, to the life. She has beauty and a certain charm, but circumstances have made her as hard and practical and sordid in her ideals as the dourest Yorkshireman that ever lived. At twenty-five, her mother being dead, she is managing the Farnish farm and household, and has her drunken, shiftless father and her younger sister, Rushie, very much under subjection. "I know what money's meant to me," she says harshly, "and what it's going to mean, and I'll take good care none goes by me so long as I've ten fingers to lay hold on it with." Her lover, under paternal influence, jilts her when her father is ruined, and he is no sooner married to his wealthy cousin that she starts breach of promise proceedings, and with the handsome sum they pay to placate her she opens a rival grocery business opposite to theirs and by her enterprise and shrewd management draws most of their trade away from them, with results that lead to estrangement between the father and son.

The story of her rapid rise to fortune and the unscrupulous ruthlessness with which she overreaches herself, is plunged into irretrievable disaster and loses everything, is unfolded with a convincing air of reality and holds the reader with a strong and cumulative interest. Yet so subtly is the strange charm of her personality conveyed that, for all her masculine hardness and stern common sense, she keeps the reader's sympathy throughout. She remains a very woman in spite of it all, and the whole story—well imagined and developed with a masterly sureness of touch—grows naturally out of the greatness and force of her character.

* "The Root of All Evil." By J. S. Fletcher. 8s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

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PROPHETS OF EVIL.*

Although the ordinary man continues to shrug his shoulders and somewhat impatiently turn the conversation to more cheerful subjects when the prophet of evil holds forth on the desperate state of the nations to-day, he no longer regards the prophet as being incurably mad. There is, he admits, "something in it." Really, it is much worse than he had imagined! But he does not yet believe that it need worry him except in so far as he suffers individually by it. The serious business of life—football, dead certs, the decline of England in sport—these must still engross his attention. And then so many of these prophets, as is the way of prophets, seem to be more interested in turning out true prophets than in considering the nature of their prophecies or in trying to ward off the truly terrible things they prophesy. For example, Mr. Robert Williams writes that "the Old Order is visibly breaking up," and he is all the more convinced because he wants it to break up. "To the Social Revolution," he says, "peacefully, if possible, but—the Social Revolution." And the ordinary man, vaguely uneasy but determined to be an optimist, snorts "Bolshevik!" and spots another—winner. Isn't Robert Williams an extremist? Well . . .?

But Mr. Williams is not alone in his view of the present position. Another writer on economic problems, a writer much more thoughtful and thorough, expresses the same conviction in almost the same terms. "The present order," writes Mr. A. J. Penty, "is doomed," and he gives reasons, deep and formidable reasons which cannot be ignored or smothered in the abusive epithet of "Bolshevik!" especially as Mr. Penty himself is one of the most vigorous anti-Bolsheviks in the country. The present order is doomed, Mr. Penty would inform the ordinary man—if the ordinary man were not too busy to listen to him—because it is based on the vicious principle of compound interest:

> "In demanding that all money shall bear compound interest, finance is committed to an absolutely impossible principle, as must be apparent to anyone who reflects on the famous arithmetical calculation that a halfpenny put out at five per cent. compound interest on the first day of the Christian era would by now amount to more money than the earth could contain."

Now, is Mr. Penty right? A glance at the foreign exchanges in the financial columns of any newspaper, exchanges which preclude the nations, no matter what their politics or policies may be, from trading fully and freely with each other, and a careful study of the Budgets of the various countries of Europe will be almost enough to convince one that he is. What, then, is to be done? The first thing, Mr. Penty suggests, is the inauguration of the "fixed price" as a step in the direction of a "just price." This would check gambling—we call it speculation—in the things that ultimately control our very existence, and bring back money to its proper function as a medium of exchange. Money would cease to be an instrument of credit and exploitation.

The present system of unfixed prices leads to unrest all round. No Act of Parliament is going to have much effect on profiteers under a system of "selling in the dearest market" or charging "what the traffic will bear." Similarly in the industrial field. We have Labour fighting on questions of wage increases or decreases when, owing to present price fixing, as a matter of fact Labour never knows from one day to another what is the actual value of the wage it receives. But the question that next arises is: How are prices to be fixed? Parliament cannot be depended upon; its bureaucratic method is too clumsy for Mr. Penty. The only competent price-fixing instrument would be the Guild. The restoration of the Guild system is the key to the economic problem:

> "When membership of a trade organisation is confined to employers it exhibits the vices of a trust. But when it includes every worker by hand or brain it will display the virtues of a Guild. For honesty and fair dealing will always find the support of the majority."

Another point insisted upon by Mr. Penty is that, as the present system decays, it becomes more and more imperative that we should grow our own food; and we can only do this by a revival of agriculture based on Guild principles. He has no views on the question of large or small holdings; he would leave that matter to the Guild to determine. On this point we get more definite statements from Mr. F. E. Green who, though a smallholder himself, is opposed to the development of small holdings. "The tractor has come to stay," and Mr. Green wants the large farm run on Guild principles, "where all are co-partners working in the interests of the whole community." He is as emphatic as Mr. Penty on the necessity for a *national* revival of agriculture, and his revelations of the scandalous misuse of land in this country are appalling. "If there is one industry which cannot be left to the tender mercies of private enterprise," says Mr. Green, "surely it is agriculture"—which will come as a surprise to many who had regarded collective effort as only possible in big centralised industries.

In his survey of the wage problem, Mr. Graham also is—moderately—eulogistic of the Guild idea, but that is about the only similarity between his book and most of the others now before us. So far from regarding the present system as being doomed, to use Mr. Penty's word, he seems to regard the rebuilding of society, more or less according to Guild ideas, as being possible within the existing order. A catastrophic change of any kind seems to him as impossible as undesirable. For the rest, for a man regarded as one of the coming leaders of political Labourism, Mr. Graham is woefully disappointing. Mr. Cole, on the other hand, as might be expected, puts forward a competent statement. He also is confidently looking forward to a definite breakdown of the present capitalist machine; and he is preparing plans for immediate use as occasion arises. For he clearly states that no "capitalist government" is likely to effect the changes in local government which he desires. By virtue of its composition and of its other duties, the State, he says, is a bad administrator, and, in any future desirable form of society, the huge mass of administrative duties that have grown up around the State must be transferred to other regional forms of social organisation. In every area—local, regional or national—Mr. Cole desires

> "a body which I will call the 'Commune,' in which all these groups of elected persons (guilds, co-operative societies and local functional organisations) will be brought together for the common determination and discussion of vital questions of policy in which they are all concerned."

All of which would be very stimulating and helpful if all of us were convinced that the present system was breaking up, and we were determined to rear some sane structure upon its ruins. But all the evidence we have seems to indicate that the people with the power to initiate vast changes are convinced that these changes are not required. The others, to be quite frank, are almost in despair. What, for example, could be more frantically hopeless than Mr. Penty's conclusion? He sums up his case by stating that, finally, only one thing in the universe is capable of supplying the necessary new principle, and that is religion. . . . ! Perhaps he is right; but, if so, at our present rate of increasing *irreligion*, the future seems likely to be worse than even the worst of us had imagined!

ROWLAND KENNEY.

* "Guilds, Trade and Agriculture." By A. J. Penty. 5s. (Allen & Unwin.)—"A New Agricultural Policy." By F. E. Green. 4s. 6d. (Parsons.)—"The Future of Local Government." By G. D. H. Cole. 5s. (Cassell.)—"The Wages of Labour." By William Graham, M.P., M.A., LL.B. 5s. (Cassell.)—"The New Labour Outlook." By Robert Williams. 4s. 6d. (Parsons.)

Novel Notes.

SCARAMOUCHE. By Raphael Sabatini. 8s. 6d. net. (Hutchinson.)

By far the best chapters in this novel of Mr. Sabatini's are those which deal with André-Louis Moreau's adventures with the Binet company of players. There is something of the rascally gaiety and scoundrelism of Scarron's

romance; the life of the strolling players, their spasmodic generosities and heroisms, their servitude and baseness is very vividly rendered. André-Louis is the bastard son of a great Breton nobleman, who takes a leading part in the anti-revolutionary movement in those stirring, early days when Mirabeau was the lion of the reformers. His conflict with the Marquis de la Tour d'Azyr is one of those vendettas which is apt to weary the reader. Mr. Sabatini makes it more tolerable by his device of making Moreau revengeful not for his own sake, but for that of his friend whom d'Azyr has murdered. There are many scenes of rhetoric: Mr. Sabatini has great skill in the picturing of crowds and the rendering of crowd-psychology; and his account of the early days of revolutionary fervour at Nantes and Rennes are full of life and colour. The love-story is a thought incidental, and we seem to have met Aline's rather tiresome, mannered type a hundred times before: she never once surprises, never is startled into natural behaviour. One turns gladly from the brief pages of love-making to those in which Mr. Sabatini writes well and sanely about the revolutionary ardour which travelled so quickly through France, like a fire which, at times misdirected, did, at any rate, burn on its journeys a great deal of very noisome rubbish.

GETTING RID OF ANNE. By Thomas Cobb. 7s. 6d. net. (Nash.)

Anne Strickland had a passion for the cinema and tried to introduce its romance and sensation into her quiet country life. Being also radiantly pretty and only nineteen she captured young men as easily as a flypaper catches flies. Always on the look-out for sentimental adventures, she throws herself into Gervase Emery's path by sinking down at the roadside just as he is approaching on his motor-cycle and pretending that she has sprained her ankle. Gervase falls into the trap immediately, and narrowly escapes making a fool of himself. He is thankful that he does escape, though, when he meets Fenella Lawson, whom he has not seen for a number of years, and realises that she is the one girl in the world for him. Everard Newland, a friend of Gervase's and Fenella's, happens to have been chums with Anne's father out at the front and, Strickland being dead, Everard wishes to see "Miss Strickland" to tell her what he knew of her relative. Fenella, like a good pal, offers to go and interview the girl in advance—not suspecting that Gervase has previously made her acquaintance—and impetuously invites Anne to stay in her London flat while looking for a job. When Anne and Gervase meet face to face there are amusing complications and Anne's yearning for romance becomes a source of great anxiety. It is altogether a delightful comedy written in Mr. Cobb's usual light, happy vein, with Anne in the centre, a lovable minx, despite her many failings.

THE TOLL OF THE SANDS. By Paul de Laney. 7s. 6d. net. (Fisher Unwin.)

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The Bookman's Table.

THE PAGEANT OF PARLIAMENT. By Michael MacDonagh. Two vols. 36s. net. (Fisher Unwin.)

It is well for Westminster that Ireland, in breaking away from its benches, has not broken with its gallery. That calamity would have robbed us of a useful leaven in the debate reports served up in the papers day by day, and might easily have deprived Parliament of its gayest annalist. Mr. MacDonagh has written freely and often of Parliament before, and the previous volumes to his credit on this theme alone are testimony that though its speeches are a nuisance, the British legislature remains one of the most fertile and entertaining topics in the world. This fact, of course, is capable of concealment at the hands of a dull chronicler, and it would be fair to say that of many descriptive writers who handle it to-day, either in the London or the provincial papers, there are not more than half a dozen who are read for anything but the news they have to convey or the party case they have to put. For one thing, there are not many departments of news where the conditions and the etiquette are so stringent, from the rules of privilege to the party or sectional interest a particular paper has to bear in mind. Reading Mr. MacDonagh you forget that there are any limitations whatever. Accuracy is so natural to him, and he is so willing to make the best of everything, even in a discredited world like party politics, that he puts upon things a rosy complexion to which they had long been a stranger, and this without the slightest strain upon our sense of probabilities. His chapter upon the Speakership brings to bear around the subject an atmosphere of dignity and history which might easily disappear in the course of a full-sized treatise, and there is no doubt that he excels in the vignette or rounded sketch which is one of the finest arts of journalism. He is brimful of anecdote without allowing his stories to burden him or the reader, and he has a masterly sense of variety, proportion and arrangement.

PURE THOUGHT AND THE RIDDLE OF THE UNIVERSE. By Francis Sedlak. 18s. net. (Allen & Unwin.)

Schopenhauer, it will be remembered, was very rude about the Hegelians. He called them the most impudent of mortals and he declared that unintelligibility was introduced by Schelling, perfected by Fichte, and carried to transcendent heights by Hegel—very profitably. Mr. Francis Sedlak here presents, not so much a digest as a re-integration of the Hegelian logic, and it must be confessed that he is as obscure as his master; but at least he knows that profits will not accrue. The treatise, which is described as Volume I, has for its sub-title, "The Creation of Heaven and Earth." A second volume called "The Creation of Man on Earth" is to follow. In the first section of the present volume Mr. Sedlak discusses Quality, from Origin to "The infinitised finite and the finitised infinite." The next part deals with Quantity, and plunges us into Hegelian mathematics till we reach the fundamental Unity of

Quality and Quantity as transitory aspects of Measurableness. An elaborate discussion of measurableness and its application to the solar universe fills the concluding two hundred pages. It is impossible to discuss such a work in a short space. Students of philosophy, and especially of the mathematical philosophy we now associate with the name of Bertrand Russell, will not fail to make themselves acquainted with Mr. Sedlak's elaborate treatise.

MOODS OF LIFE. By Arthur Lynch. 6s. (Cassell.)

Mr. Arthur Lynch is a surprisingly attractive writer. Without many of the graces of the literary artist, his essays appeal by straight, kindly sayings. His new book, "Moods of Life," is the very salt and savour of modern journalism. Here are fifty-two essays on nearly every aspect of the mind of modern America and England, and all of them such as a man might read with pleasure and no great effort in the train from suburb to city. Mr. Lynch, the essayist, is not exactly a Stevenson in style or a Bacon in depth. His is the muse of common sense rather than of philosophy. Yet with him common sense is never that creed of the dull and vulgar that so often passes by the name; he has a finer sense of the value and nobility of life. "Politeness is an aid to efficiency," he quotes, and then goes on to show that it is something far more than that—some radiant covering to the inner splendour of man's soul. His book ends not on the note of worldly success, but in praise and defence of poetry. "All that is worth living for is the poetry of life" is a fine creed for the champion of common sense. Mr. Lynch looks life straight in the face, and seems very well pleased with what he sees. More important, he gives the same impression to the reader. He fully realises that man is a puny creature whirled through space in a minute world. What a splendid adventure, is his comment. One word more—for the raconteur. The book contains a most excellent collection of well-told stories.

A BOOK OF ENGLISH VERSE ON INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD. Chosen by L. S. Wood. 3s. 6d. net. (Macmillan.)

An anthology of English verse on childhood should fill a long-felt want on the shelves of those book-lovers who are lovers of children as well. "Poems on childhood are comparatively few in number and many of them are little known," says Mr. L. S. Wood, the compiler, in his preface to this anthology, just added by Messrs. Macmillan to their Golden Treasury series. "They are scattered in many volumes by many writers, and the light they throw on the most beautiful period of human life is thus lost to persons who are interested in children but who are not regular readers of poetry." It is not a book for children, but a book about children which covers a wide range of time and ideas. It is too difficult to pick out for special mention any one poem from a book that is packed from cover to cover with freshness and charm.

PLAYTIME GAMES FOR BOYS AND GIRLS. By Emma C. Dowd. 5s. (Harrap.)

Parents, you must really endeavour to raise five shillings to purchase this most thrilling and happy book. In story form we are told all about many delightful games that are quite unknown to the average family, games that will engross your small folk on sunny afternoons, and games that will keep them gaily occupied on the disappointing wet days that chain them up indoors. There is a pretty young Aunt Ruth in these pages who really thinks of the most ingenious ways of amusing bored little boys and girls. "Hop and Hold" is a fine sporting game, which can be played outside or in an empty garret, providing you can raise a bit of chalk and a bit of stone to hold. There is a fascinating play called "Little Bo-peep," with sheep, wolf and mastiff, to be tried when guests come to tea, not to speak of descriptions of writing games and games of mental calculation.

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ASTARTE. By Ralph Earl of Lovelace. New Edition, with many additional letters. 18s. (Christophers.)

A new edition of the late Lord Lovelace's uncommon book entitled "Astarte" (which first appeared in a limited issue sixteen years ago) has revived the ancient controversy concerning the relations which existed between Byron and his half-sister. It is a curious and unpleasant topic to have occupied the public mind on and off for over a hundred years, but when the accusation involved attaches to a distinguished literary man, who is also a peer, it is not altogether surprising that the subject remains one of perennial speculation and interest. It furnishes too a good battle-ground for those who like controversy. The evidence for the prosecution is not altogether conclusive—it would be difficult to adduce evidence in any case of the kind except an actual confession signed and witnessed. But when Byron's grandson, the late Lord Lovelace, felt it his duty (in the interests of the reputation of his grandmother, Lady Byron) to prove the charge, there can be little room to doubt its accuracy, especially in view of the documentary evidence that has been published in the new edition of "Astarte." Nevertheless there are still those who remain unconvinced, among them Lord Ernle, whose views will be found in a current review.

WHITE HORSES, AND OTHER POEMS. By L. A. Hurst Shorter. 5s. net. (Humphreys.)

Mr. Shorter's pen is very facile and too often runs away with him; and he is always a little too ready to adorn his tale with a moral:

> "How better can a man devote his life
> Than to the service of humanity,
> By using every energy to try
> To lessen all the suffering that's rife?"

These are typical lines—from a poem entitled "The Doctor." And here is the last verse of a poem in praise of "The Covenant":

> "Which covenant is named the League of Nations
> And, if fulfilled, will change the face of earth;
> Bless and enrich those future generations,
> Recipients of the firstfruits of its birth.
> O brother men, in divers lands and stations,
> Of willing converts let there be no dearth!
> Allow no *if* to prove inimical,
> But let your watchword ever be '*it shall!*'"

That is excellent propaganda, and we heartily subscribe to it. But is it poetry?

Music.

THREE MUSICAL INNOVATORS.

By A. EAGLEFIELD HULL.

II. ALEXANDER SCRIABIN.

Photo by E. N. A. **M. Alexander Scriabin.**

ALEXANDER NICOLAS SCRIABIN was born on Christmas Day, 1871, in Moscow, in his grandfather's house. The father, a young lawyer from Saratoff, and the mother, a piano medallist of the Petrograd Conservatoire, did not number forty years between them. When the baby was two years old the mother died of consumption, and the child was reared by its grandparents.

The boy revealed extraordinary talents at an early age. At five he could play from memory the smaller classics after having heard them once.* At eight he composed pieces, wrote poems, and manufactured miniature pianofortes, thus manifesting a precocious sense of form and accuracy, two qualities which characterise all his work. From nine to sixteen he was able to study music along with the ordinary curriculum at the cadet school for officers' children. Apart from Arensky, who refused to see any remarkable musical gifts in the young man, Scriabin was particularly fortunate in his music tutors: Conus, Zverieff, Safonoff and Taneieff.

Conus was one of the greatest teachers of orchestration who ever lived. Zverieff had many famous pupils, including Rachmaninoff. Taneieff's reputation as a teacher of counterpoint and polyphony is immense, and Safonoff's broad musicianship and knowledge of piano effect has a world-wide recognition.

Scriabin was fortunate also in his patron, Michael Belaieff, the millionaire merchant who founded a great music publishing house. He placed Scriabin in such circumstances of financial ease as allowed him to do his best work from the outset, and this practical friendship only ended thirteen years later with the death of Belaieff in January, 1904.

His compositions up to this date include the lovely Piano Concerto, the Reverie for Orchestra, the first three symphonies, the first four sonatas, and scores of preludes, nocturnes, mazurkas and other pieces for the piano.

This year marks the division between his first and more characteristic periods. In 1903 he left his tutorial post at the Moscow Conservatoire, the duties of which were not congenial to him, and abandoned (a particularly good word in his case) himself to composition. He lived for a time in Switzerland (at lovely Beattenberg), and then domiciled in Brussels, where he married again, and became a keen theosophist. His circle included Delville, Schure, Verhaeren and Mahrhofer. He played and conducted in New York, London, Paris and Moscow, and travelled up and down the Volga with the great and generous conductor, Kussevitscky, in pursuance of his mission for taking the finest of orchestras with the finest of music to the great cities of the Russian provinces. It was just before a repetition of this great enterprise that Scriabin died suddenly from blood-poisoning.

Between 1904 and the year of his death (1915) he had created his orchestral masterpieces, "The Poem of

* Thus easily superseding the marvellous cases of recording memory given by Bernard Shaw on p. xxix of his "Back to Methuselah."

Ecstasy" and "Prometheus," the Piano Sonatas, Nos. 5 to 10, and eighty-five other pieces in every conceivable style, form and colour.

Scriabin was born in 1871 and died in 1915: forty-four years. Debussy was born in 1862 and died in 1918: fifty-six years. It is instructive to compare the French master's contribution with that of the younger Russian.

After we have discussed the special qualities of Scriabin's music, we shall be bound to ask the question, Why is Debussy's music so widely known, and why is Scriabin's so little known? Comparisons may perhaps be odious; they are often helpful in arriving at a true appraisement in an art where true standards of criticism are so rare.

* * * * *

Although the 108 pieces up to Opus 30 cannot be too highly praised (and ignorance of them is a great loss to the true music-lover), in deference to my title I only propose here to make a few passing comments on such features as point forward to his finer creations.

I will first refer to what may be called his "harmony of rhythm," his polyphony of time-groups. Brahms has juggled with combined rhythms; so too have Reger, Arensky and Debussy; but no master of music has ever achieved the wonders of Scriabin in this direction. We find the prophecy of his great rhythmic powers already in the Concert "Allegro Appassionata," Opus 4, and we see it again in the spirited combination of the quintuplets of the right hand with the triplets of the left, in the second of the 12 Etudes, Opus 8, and in the odd rhythms of the third study in the same set. Here, by rhythmic means alone, the composer obtains that curious vibrational flickering which he achieves by polychromatic harmony in the later works, such as Opus 67, No. 2 (Preludes). In the 7th Etude of Opus 8 we already find the curious overdriving of the bass triplets; and long ere this we meet the downward drive of the bass arpeggio. The 8 Etudes of Opus 42 are all highly interesting in rhythm—nines against fives, threes against overdriven fives, nines and threes, threes against twos, and so on.

His harmonic achievements are suggested in innumerable passages in these early works, where one hears him continually experimenting with the natural overtones, pushing forward a note here and a note there, towards his new chord formations. Right from the very beginning we feel that whereas with Debussy we have merely a manner, with Scriabin we have a deep spiritual message. "Wings, wings, always wings, with Scriabin," Miss Heyman writes in her new book,* and Scriabin is already in etheric regions in that lovely little prelude, Opus 2, No. 2, written during the cadet period. There too can be found his wealth of tenor melodies in perfect freedom yet closest accord with the treble melodic line; for Scriabin is always the polyphonic composer. How could a pupil of Taneieff's be otherwise?

* * * * *

Scriabin's harmony is an altogether new element in music. Whether he achieved it through his scientific experiments, through the esoteric channels of his own

* "The Relation of Ultra-modern to Archaic Music": Small, Maynard & Co., Boston.

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ideas on mysticism, or through an accident in his search for a union between sound and colour, matters little to us who are content to revel in the beautiful realm which he added to the world of sound. His harmonies have "a strange force and sweetness and eloquence, a new colour that seems to be compounded of the rarer vibrations of the ether."* This is because he concerned himself more with the *after*-tones than with the actual chords struck. He thus gives the piano a new singing quality never imagined before, supplying to a large extent the deficiency of sustaining power inherent in the nature of all percussion instruments.

With each work he focuses the cosmos anew. Notwithstanding the perfection of form and the fineness of meaning in his music, his singleness of aim—a higher consciousness—leaves nothing for the interpreter to feed his vanity upon. There is no ornamentation, no superfluity in his music, complex though it looks. He had to advance against opposition and discouragements, even ridicule; but he never wavered in his belief in the religion of art. He concludes his First Symphony (written at the age of 18) with a choral epilogue which is a Hymn of Glory to Art. In the Second (about 1900) we see the significant rhythmic ideas of the "Ecstasy" and "Poem of Fire" (Prometheus). The third, entitled "The Divine Poem" (1903), has a Prologue containing motives of Divine Grandeur, the Summons to Man, the Fear to approach, and three movements—"Luttes," "Voluptés" and "Jeu divin," representing various stages of spiritual evolution, the liberation of the spirit from fetters, and the self-affirmation of personality. The Fourth Piano Sonata (of the same year) has a similar cosmic view. The prologue contains two musical mottoes—the striving towards the ideal and the languor resulting from the struggle. We then have a movement of divine rhythmic play, and the ecstacy of the free, untrammelled spirit.

Five years intervene between this Symphony and the "Poem of Ecstasy" and the Fifth Sonata, both founded on a poem by Scriabin himself, from which he quotes:

> *"Je vous appelle à la vie, ô forces mystérieuses!*
> *Noyées dans les obscures profondeurs*
> *De l'esprit créateur, craintives*
> *Ébauches de vie, à vous j'apporte l'audace."*

The Sonata is in advance of the orchestral "Poem of Ecstasy," just as Sonatas 6 to 10 go immensely forward from the orchestral "Poem of Fire" (1909-10). The Sixth and Seventh Sonatas belong to 1911, and the last three to 1913. The "Ecstasy" represents a series of continually baffled spiritual struggles, each however one stage nearer its goal. "Prometheus" is a nutshell-cosmic philosophy portraying the evolution of the Ego from embryonic life to perfect realisation.

Each of the later sonatas would require an article to itself. Sufficient has been said to indicate the strange spiritual content of Scriabin's music, a content which is seldom grasped by the numerous piano "recitalists" who play his music merely for the sake of being in the swim.

* * * * *

In a lecture given early this year I asked how it was that Debussy's music was so widely known and the far finer and more important music of Scriabin was comparatively little known. One answer was given: "French music has been exploited by publishers, performers and teachers in a very practical way. The Russians have always, in these things, been the most unpractical, unworldly people on earth." Another answer I received in June when, in the space of two days, four recitals were devoted entirely to Scriabin, without the recitalists having any knowledge of one another's intentions.

* E. Newman.

THE ENJOYMENT OF MUSIC. By Arthur W. Pollitt. With an Introduction by E. T. Campagnac. 5s. net. (Methuen.)

This agreeable volume is meant for the untrained hearer—the kind of man who rather likes the sort of noise he hears at a symphony concert, but doesn't understand anything about music, and wishes he did. He will find here a great deal to enlighten him. He will find, chief of all, a fiercely sincere author, who contends firmly and grimly for what may be called the intellectual aspect of music. Music to him is not merely a collection of sounds producing (or preventing) slumber after dinner, but a great emotional art, built upon strong and sure intellectual foundations. And so he takes the reader through the main forms in which music is written. Some, like the sonata, he explains very elaborately; some, like the fugue, a little inadequately. The chapter on fugue begins excellently, but it leaves off much too soon, and our supposed unmusical hearer won't get a great deal from it. We think the author's manner a little lacking in persuasiveness, but on the whole he has done well. The beginner needs to be told something very definitely and clearly. Mr. Pollitt is very clear and his book is therefore very helpful.

NOTES ON NEW MUSIC.

MIDSUMMER. By Michael Felton. (Schott.)

Full of movement, these are indeed "six bright pieces," though we wish the cover had not announced this fact before we found it out for ourselves.

TWO STUDIES OF BELGIUM. By John C. Holliday. (Renaissance Music Co.)

Though none too easy for the average player these pieces are to be recommended for their descriptive qualities, and the feeling and sense of atmosphere they convey.

POETICAL STUDIES. By Alec Rowley. (Edwin Ashdown.)

Dainty and tuneful, these five descriptive pieces could be rendered effectively by those who, while lacking great technical efficiency, yet have moderate skill and imagination.

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FOUR MINIATURES. By Reginald Thatcher. (Augener.)

These four Miniatures by Reginald Thatcher are all short, simple and effective. An admirable quartet for those who desire the not-too-difficult picturesque.

The Drama.

THE RUSSIAN BALLET.

BY ANTHONY CLYNE.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé **Mlle. Anna Pavlova.**

THE philosophy of dancing, from the æsthetic and all other aspects, has not yet been thoroughly explored, though Plato, Diderot, and Herbert Spencer have all made partial examinations of the subject. The lack of any comprehensive treatment of it is brought to our consciousness now as never before by the Russian Ballet. For this is a wonderfully beautiful creation, surely the most beautiful that has ever appeared on the stage. Many volumes have been filled with the results of patient investigation into the principles which underlie, for example, the art of music. There is no real difference in the subtlety of any of the arts, only in our degrees of insight into their fundamental laws. Consider the histories of music, the careful studies of its phases, the analyses of individual composers. Had dancing evolved in the same manner, as it might in other conditions have done, it would have achieved as much for the human spirit, and as much thought might have been devoted to its study.

One feels this especially now, because in the Russian Ballet dancing manifests itself in the most perfect form it has yet attained, and it does so by amalgamating itself with the other arts. Painting, dancing, and music are combined as never before, and by their amalgamation a new and tremendously effective art-form is brought to birth. At the end of last century the idea of appealing to the spirit through all possible artistic channels at once, of fusing the arts to weld them into one instrument with multiplied force and delicacy, was a favourite dream of a few French enthusiasts. The Russian Ballet is the nearest approach to their ideal yet made.

Dancing is as ancient as any art, but this is the entry on a new stage, when the possibilities of movement and gesture are made manifest as were those of music by the invention or discovery, for both words are accurate from different aspects, of the scale. The Russian Ballet is not so much the latest and finest exposition of an old art as the first and inspiring beginning of a new one. The old ballet was discredited and lifeless. It was discredited as a crude music-hall display, popular only with the type of audience whom an exhibition of female legs and busts attracts, the more or less skilful movements of the dancers being a mere excuse for the introduction of this exhibition. It was lifeless as a feeble survival in certain operas. Its movements became conventionalised. It was content to copy preceding models, until all vital inspiration

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faded. It was accompanied by music, but it was not indissolubly wedded to music. The music was ballet music, but the relationship was not much closer than that between the words and the music of the countless ballads to which suburban drawing-rooms resound. "The Good-Humoured Ladies," for example, has Scarlatti's "pattern" music, music very lovely in itself, designed with dainty fascination. But for the comedy of Goldoni any other might have been substituted, so long as it had daintiness, exquisite, sentimental, pretty allurement. There was no marriage of the spectacle and movements on the stage with the music, merely a pleasant adjustment. One might have fitted another plot to the same music, or other music of the same period and nature to the same plot. Their parallel appeals were cleverly joined. In the Russian Ballet the appeals are not parallel; there is no fitting together. There is only one appeal: the ballet as a whole, music, dancing, and decoration making one indivisible art-form.

The decay of the old ballet was largely caused by its association with opera, in the more attenuated of which it survived as an antiquated nuisance. In the "Huguenots," an excellent example of the preposterous, irrational pre-Wagnerian opera, in which, as George Sampson candidly expresses it, "what was too stupid to say was sung," it was an incident endured patiently as in keeping with the senselessness of the rest of the opera. In "Carmen" most of the audience were more resentful, deeming it an illogical intrusion into the action. In "Faust" it ceased to be tolerated as a boring interruption, and was discarded. The reason it survived even in a feeble fashion was that the operas themselves were built on such ridiculous foundations, that an irrelevant diversion in a conglomeration of irrelevancies was allowed. But Wagner rationalised opera. The generations that succeeded him have learnt to demand a marriage of words and music, not merely a parallel movement, an artistically symmetrical and rational plot intimately related to the music. Ballet in such music-dramas became an excrescence no longer to be tolerated. Imagine a ballet in "Fédora"! It is unthinkable. A hero in Norfolk tweed suit and plaid stockings dancing in a ballet! Operatic ballet died. It had come into existence only as the union of two things utterly conventional, artificial, irrational, ridiculous, one supporting the intellectual and æsthetic feebleness of the other. When one emerged into genuine artistic power, it discarded the other.

Only when ballet was ousted from opera could it come into its own. Freed from the bonds of dramatic singing, it began to exhibit a vitality of its own. Even Wagner and his school have not entirely subdued the tremendous difficulties of wedding words and music, a combination which is condemned to travel near the verge of the absurd, and by one false step, so easily taken, enter the ridiculous and be plunged to destruction. Only in a brief lyric can words and music possibly be free from this danger, simply because of its shortness. In any longer action, in any love-making or despairing or dying or revenging or envying, duets and solos are imperfect modes of expression. Words are too definite to amalgamate with the perfect fluidity of music. But dancing itself is perfectly fluid. When emancipated from the intellectualism which opera demands, because of its verbal form, it becomes possible to amalgamate it absolutely with music and painting as an expression of emotionalism.

This was accomplished in Russia by a fortunate concatenation of circumstances. The clearest exposition of the reasons for the Russian origin is to be found in Ellen Terry's "The Russian Ballet," published some six or seven years ago. At the same time there happened to exist in Russia all the ingredients of success—a people in whom enthusiasm for its peculiar qualities could be evoked, owing to their racial temperament, the essential patronage of the Imperial Court and the wealthy nobility, a school of highly-trained expert dancers to interpret the ballet, brilliant artists of precisely the required nature of talent to provide its decoration, composers of precisely the required nature of genius to supply the music, maestros of unrivalled skill to arrange the themes.

Ballet of the type of "The Good-Humoured Ladies" was but dainty, fascinating, graceful, like a fine lady in silks and satins. Any deeper, darker emotions were impossible. They would have fractured the delicate cup of sparkling champagne. The Russian Ballet became capable of expressing other things—fear, revenge, horror, the abandonment of passion and its painful ecstasy. It was at times terrible and majestic as a warrior armed and fighting bloodily for life. Into it was poured draughts of greater potency, intoxicating, viscid, dark, as well as merely effervescent and exhilarating.

This is the significance of the Russian Ballet and its immense artistic importance. Pavlova, Nijinsky, Karsavina, Lopokova, and the others are not successors of Taglioni, Grahn, and Cerito. They are exponents of a new art-form, in which there is an overpowering amalgamation of arts, and the music of Rimsky Korsakov, Stravinsky, and the rest is no longer the accompaniment of the old ballet, but an organic part of the whole. The whole difference may be realised by comparing "The Good-Humoured Ladies" with "Petroushka," in which colour, movement and sound are blended to bring a flow of impressions—a crowd at festival time, now of pity for these half-human dancing dolls, now of the grotesque and bitter irony of their fate, of love and folly, luxury and human sadness. Better still is comparison with "Scheherazade," passionately barbaric, grimly humorous, gorgeously ghastly. Words might partially crystallise these fleeting impressions, but they would destroy their peculiar power. The wild passion of abandonment in that scene where the white women of the harem let in their dark-skinned lovers and the whole stage is riotous with colour and rhythmic movement—what have words to do with this?

THE CRAFT OF "QUALITY STREET."

A rather dangerous experiment, the revival after a tale of years of Sir J. M. Barrie's "Quality Street" at the Haymarket—but an amazing success. One had expected that the emancipated girls of to-day would have had nothing but contempt for Miss Susan Throssel and her sister, "Phœbe of the Ringlets," trembling with fear and delight in the presence of "dashing Valentine Brown"—

a simple, harmless creature enough—but the women in the audience enjoy those quaint old tremors of the Peninsular and Waterloo days immensely, and every one laughs heartily while Barrie is laughing at himself.

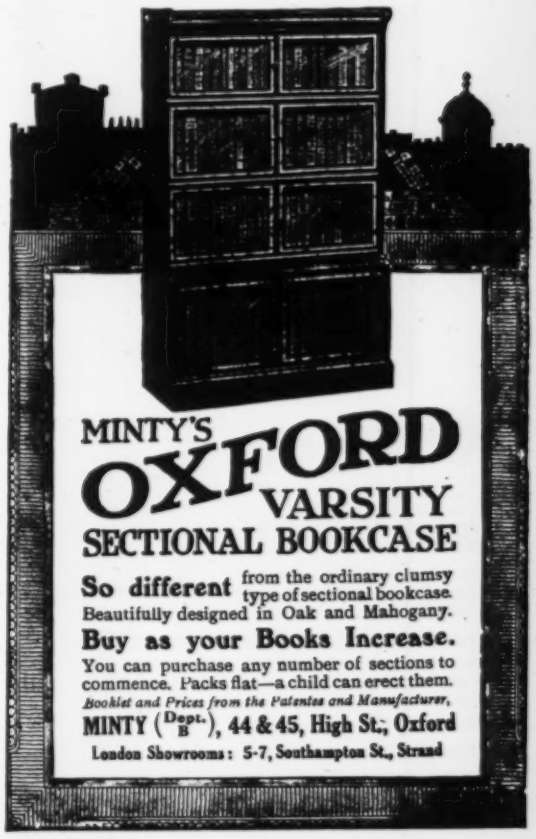
Barrie has been always, to his own infinite disgust, an inveterate sentimentalist, and even went to the length of killing himself in the person of "Sentimental Tommy." The subject of "Quality Street," with its air of decorum, its potpourri and spinet music, must have been a tremendous temptation to him to revel in sentiment; and he did. That period of utterly helpless women whose lives were corroded if they did not marry before twenty-five at latest, appealed to Barrie's sensitive heart; and then when he had got the sighs and the tears exactly, he escaped mawkishness by a gentle ridicule of the airs and graces of an epoch as artificial as the age of Anne. We love Phœbe, not because of her silly misunderstanding of Valentine Brown's intentions, but because of her vivacious malice in tricking Captain Brown when he returns from the wars, majestical and lacking an arm, into the belief that she is her own niece, Livvy—a niece who does not exist. We admire Miss Susan not because she is a hopeless failure as a school teacher, but because she is more than a match in artfulness for the inquisitive Misses Willoughby and all the other Quality Street gentlewomen.

I noted with surprise that several of the critics of the daily Press commented on the old-fashionedness of "Quality Street," and were most superior about its out-of-dateness. As a matter of course, this is a play that will not age. It is one of those comedies of manners which marks the characteristics and hits off the foibles of a period. In the days when people in England talked with bated breath of the Corsican Ogre's appetite for babies, many impossible things were believed in. To us the idea of middle-aged Phœbe so successfully disguising herself as the girlish Olivia that she deceives all sharp-eyed Quality Street as well as alert Captain Brown, is absurd, but such a device was one of the permitted ruses of the age. One might as well blame Oliver Goldsmith for turning Kate Hardcastle into a barmaid in "She Stoops to Conquer." "Quality Street," if it had its full complement of Barrie wit, would take rank with Sheridan's and Goldsmith's comedies; but Barrie elected to throw in his lot with the unhumorous charm of Susan and Phœbe, and has given us a couple of prose cameos better than Fanny Burney's and equal to Jane Austen's.

Miss Fay Compton was altogether fascinating as Phœbe, but had scarcely enough vivacity and fragility for the earlier scenes. Miss Mary Jerrold's Miss Susan was an unforgettable piece of exquisite acting. She was an adorable elderly spinster. Leon Quartermaine's Captain Valentine Brown—"so dashing"—was a manly performance. He spoke the most sentimental lines as if he actually meant them. Hilda Trevelyan's Patty is the triumph of great art in a small part.

HOW SYNGE WROTE "THE PLAYBOY."

The revival of J. M. Synge's "The Playboy of the Western World" was a happy inspiration of Mr. J. B. Fagan's. Put on at the Court Theatre for a month, this masterpiece of our modern day still draws intellectual London, and will run well into the autumn while inept comedies, vulgar farces and brainless revues are falling like shrivelled autumn leaves. Maire O'Neill as Pegeen Mike, Fred O'Donovan as Christie Mahon ("The Playboy"), Sara Allgood as the Widow Quinn, and Arthur Sinclair as Michael James, Pegeen's father, are a marvellous band of players, displaying that splendid unconsciousness of an audience and implicit attention to the business of the play which is the essence of true dramatic art. Looking at them one was not aware that the four walls of a theatre existed. It seemed as though the playgoers were transported to the rich life of a little country where romance and realism walk hand in hand.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Changes have been made in the cast to provide for the production of the play in America, but the level of acting at the Court has not diminished a jot.

"The Playboy of the Western World" is made of the fantastic stuff of "Don Quixote" and "Cyrano de Bergerac," but it has an elemental rustic simplicity that Cervantes and Rostand did not reveal, though the former's Sancho Panza has the peasant's craft and jollity. "The Playboy of the Western World" has an appeal to the whole world, though its characters centre round a rough-and-ready public-house in a small village in Mayo. The play owes nothing to scenery and less to costume. The whole wonder of it is in its language. There are parts of Ireland still where Elizabethan English is spoken with the idiom of the Gael. It is quite certain, however, that in no corner of the sister island is such dialogue spoken as Synge puts into the mouths of his characters. Like all great artists, he sifted the gold from the sand. The Aran Islands, where he spent his last years, were his treasure ground, and he extracted from the racy, poetic talk of the dwellers there the wonderful fabric of the most virile play that Europe has known for generations. As his most defiant admirer, Mr. Ernest Boyd, suggested, he so completely identified himself with the life of the people, and so thoroughly coloured his vision with the Gaelic spirit of his original conception, that he could create where others reported.

Synge was the interpreter for whom Ireland waited. He was a linguist, a critic, a traveller, and in all his roamings he studied speech as painters study colour; but he admitted that nowhere except in Ireland had he the material of his dreams to his hand. "In countries," he wrote, "where the imagination of the people, and the language they use, is rich and living, it is possible for a writer to be rich and copious in his words, and at the same time to give the reality, which is the root of all poetry, in a comprehensive and natural form."

That is Synge's golden secret, but its application will remain a mystery to all but those who have the genius to transmute scattered sayings into dialogue tense, yet easy.

Half a dozen unlettered peasants, including a would-be parricide, a shrew, an evil woman, a weakling and a drunkard—these are difficult figures to write a great play round. Synge, the magician, did it, and fashioned Ireland's greatest poetic farce.

L. J. McQ.

THE EDGE O' BEYOND. Garrick Theatre. Adapted by Roy Horniman and Ruby Miller from the novel of the same name by Gertrude Page.

I have never been to Rhodesia, and after seeing this play I have no desire to go there. Apparently the air of that country has something in it that causes nice young Englishmen to smoke cigars during tea; to take semicircular bites out of enormous pieces of cake and then talk with their mouths full; to utter cheap cynicisms and melting sentimentalities alternately; and generally to behave themselves in a manner that I have never seen equalled—even in a subaltern appointed Assistant Provost-Marshal in a rural area. This dreadful atmosphere casts its blighting influence also on a woman ("Dinah"), arousing in the audience a wild desire to spank her and put her to bed—if only to stop her breathless enthusiasm. One woman, however, is proof against the poison—Miss Doris Lloyd, whose Joyce is like rain on a parched plain. From the beginning she remembers that she is impersonating a human being, and at the end of the second act she rises to a painful situation with real power. The other members of a large cast are "easy victims" to the disease; one feels that they are struggling more or less gallantly against influences too strong for them. The agony of the "rollicking fun" is only exceeded by the torture of the solemn crises which occur at almost regular intervals. The play should run for quite a long time, for it contains a lot of extraordinarily dull dialogue of the explanatory type and a vast number of utterly improbable situations.

F. D. G.

SECOND PLAYS. By A. A. Milne. 7s. 6d. net. (Chatto & Windus.)

> "Mr. Hilaire Belloc
> Is a case for legislation ad hoc.
> He seems to think nobody minds
> His books being all of different kinds."

Thus Mr. Chesterton: the same genial compliment (for in these days of popular writers, each exploiting some commercial "stunt" *ad nauseam*, it *is* a compliment), is due to Mr. A. A. Milne, whose new book contains a children's play, two widely different types of fantastic comedy, and two little studies of a grimmer kind: each quite distinct, yet all shot with that delicate unmistakable personality of authorship which, as Mr. Milne suggests wisely in his preface, is inseparable from genuine creative art.

In the same preface (which it is a shame to quote: if you want to know why, read it!) Mr. Milne complains that "the difficulty in the way of writing a children's play is that Barrie was born too soon." Yet his art has little in common with that of Barrie; Barrie's strength lies mainly in the born dramatist's gift of visualisation, in little telling touches of stage "business" and position, on which Mr. Milne relies hardly at all. His "Make-Believe" is a delightful story, rather than a play; but it is a story of real children, seen with a child's eyes, not through the spectacles of a grown-up and (dare we say it?) slightly cynical uncle.

Of the more serious plays, "The Camberley Triangle" is "How He Lied to Her Husband" brought up to date. But it is finer stuff than Mr. Shaw's; what it loses in hard brilliancy it gains in sincerity—that kind of vital simplicity which looks so easy till one comes to do it. It has some brilliant dialogue too, as when the returning war-husband surprises a lover with his wife: he suggests that each shall have five minutes alone with her to state his case. . . . *The Lover:* "Five minutes in which to tell her lies about me, eh?" *The Husband:* "Damn it, *you've* had a whole year in which to tell her lies about yourself; you oughtn't to grudge me five minutes." From a dramatic standpoint, "The Camberley Triangle" is the best thing in the collection.

The two fantastic comedies, "The Romantic Age" and "Mr. Pim Passes By," will be, to playgoing readers, the most familiar section of the book. Here again Mr. Milne's realism is the dominant note. Now "realism," like "bigamy" in "Mr. Pim," is "an ugly word, isn't it?"—suggesting slum life, sordid passions and the like. But Mr. Milne's is not that kind; it is the mellow fruit of loving observation, the romance that lurks in little well-known daily things—swindlers and stockbrokers, bread-sauce and bacon-fat and bull's eyes, old gentlemen whose idiotic absentmindedness leads very nearly to disaster—but not quite. For the sunny temperament of Mr. Milne shines through his work, outbluffing melancholy. Ever loath "that Youth's sweet-scented Manuscript should close," he prolongs make-believe to the full prime of adolescence. He is the apologist of youth.

GRAHAM SUTTON.

PLAYS TO BE SEEN.

"Quality Street," by Sir J. M. Barrie. At the Haymarket.

"Abraham Lincoln," by John Drinkwater. At the Lyceum.

"If," by Lord Dunsany. At the Ambassadors'.

"The Playboy of the Western World," by J. M. Synge. At the Court.

"The Knave of Diamonds," by Ethel M. Dell. At the Globe.

"The Beggar's Opera," by John Gay. At the Lyric, Hammersmith.

"Threads," by Frank Stayton. At the St. James's.

"A Bill of Divorcement," by Clemence Dane. At the St. Martin's.

"Bull-Dog Drummond," by "Sapper." At Wyndham's.

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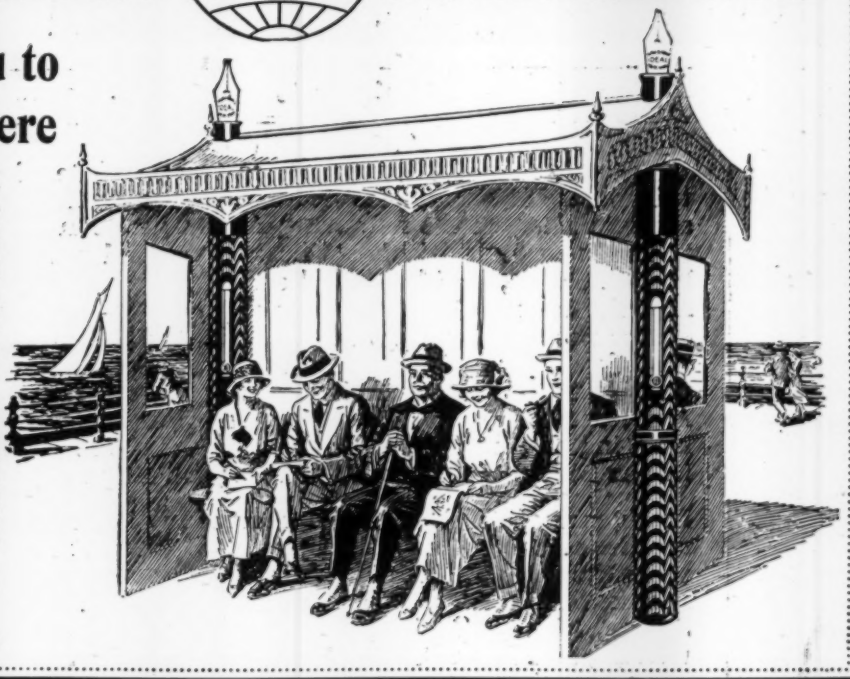

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